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**The Development of Turkish-American Relations: 1945-1952**

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**The Development of Turkish-American Relations: 1945-1952**

**by**

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## **Abstract**

### **The Development of Turkish-American Relations: 1945-1952**

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Abstract: The end of World War II prompted a series of changes in international relations. Turkish-American relations were heavily impacted by the end of the war, and geopolitical factors influenced the development of Turkish-American relations. This paper seeks to demonstrate that the development of Turkish-American relations directly responded to the Soviet Union and Turkish-Soviet tensions.

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## **Introduction**

Prior to World War II, neither Turkey nor the US prioritized Turkish-American relations. As the war came to an end, the US and Turkey began to collaborate on a deeper level, and within a decade, became key allies for one another. While much of the collaboration can be attributed to the Cold War climate and the bipolar world order that arose, Turkish-American relations strengthened due to several reasons, pressure from the Soviet Union merely being one. This paper seeks to explore the development of Turkish-American relations from the end of World War II to Turkey's accession into NATO in 1952 in order to determine when and how the two states developed such a close alliance without possessing a shared history.

This paper primarily utilizes diplomatic documents from the United States Department of State in addition to Turkish and American works that chronicle the early years of Turkish-American relations. The diplomatic documents from the Department of State form the bulk of the scholarship for this paper because, in addition to showing thorough documentation of conversations and meetings throughout this period, they also provide a glimpse into other actors' roles in the development of Turkish-American relations. Existing scholarship on this topic does not delve into the political dynamics that impacted the US, Turkey, and the USSR. This paper seeks to add the role of the USSR into conversations about Turkish-American relations.

Divided into three chapters, it considers the development of Turkish-American relations chronologically. Chapter One covers the end of World War II and its aftermath,



examining how the US and Turkey initially began their alliance. Chapter Two examines the start of large amounts of American economic and military aid provided to Turkey and questions why the United States viewed Turkey as a financial priority. Chapter Three traces Turkey's road to NATO membership, considering Turkey's participation in the Korean War and other NATO members' reluctance to admit Turkey into the organization.

Existing works on this topic tend to merely recount events that shaped the development of Turkish-American relations without fully explaining why particular events were important or how they shaped the Turkish-American relationship during the Cold War. Because Turkey, even during World War II, had a large population and plenty of natural resources, it hypothetically could have pursued a policy of neutrality when the Cold War began, as other states, such as India chose to do. However, this paper seeks to examine why Soviet pressure on Turkey made an alliance with the United States increasingly appealing. When considering the influence the Soviet Union exerted over Turkey in the Cold War years, it becomes clearer that Turkish-American relations developed out of Turkey's disdain toward the Soviet Union rather than merely admiration of the United States.

## **Chapter One: Turkey's Position in a New World Order**

Prior to World War II, the US and Turkey had little diplomatic interest in one another. While they did have diplomatic relations, neither party considered this relationship to be particularly important. As WWII came to an end, however, this relationship began to shift. 1945-46 laid the groundwork for burgeoning Turkish-American relations, with greater economic involvement and diplomatic interactions. Throughout these two years, this relationship altered from being casually diplomatic to preempting the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan. As this transition did not happen overnight, examining these years sheds light on how this transition developed.

This chapter addresses a range of factors that influenced the development of Turkish-American relations. These factors include financial relations, geopolitical relations, and international agreements as they pertain to the US, Turkey, and other influential states, such as the UK and USSR. Additionally, this chapter includes Turkish and American speculation about the Soviet Union and its intentions in order to capture the mindset the diplomats were operating in. This chapter seeks to provide a foundation of the early days of the Turkish-American alliance in preparation for the final chapters.

### *Financial Components*

At the beginning of 1945, the United States and Turkey sought to collaborate on a mutual aid agreement as a continuation of the Lend-Lease agreement of 1941.<sup>1</sup> Because of the high cost of maintaining a large standing army, Turkey lacked the funds to purchase adequate amounts of vehicular equipment, including trucks and tires, in order to continue its industrial and agricultural development. However, hesitancies on the Turkish side extended the length of the negotiation process to determine the terms of a mutual aid agreement. At this point in time, Turkish-American relations dealt primarily with economic aid. However, in the early 1940s, the United Kingdom played a larger role in providing Turkey with economic aid and the British and the Turks viewed the Anglo-Turkish alliance as a much stronger relationship than the Turkish-American relationship.

In the initial days of Turkey's participation in the Lend-Lease program, some American goods were delivered to Turkey by the British. The Lend-Lease program allowed the US to provide goods and materials to other countries, including Turkey, at a favorable rate. Turkey had a serious concern about whether it would be charged twice, once by each country, for these goods since they were delivered by the British but had an American origin. As a result, Turkey remained hesitant to sign any agreement with the United States unless the agreement explicitly included language to ensure that Turkey did not pay twice for the goods it received under the Lend-Lease program.<sup>2</sup> Fearful that

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<sup>1</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1265. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1265>

<sup>2</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1268. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1268>

communication with the British could cause the Turks to refrain from signing the pending agreement, the United States took the liberty of assuring the Turkish government that not only would it not be double charged for goods, but that the US had access to all of the records of shipments received by Turkey during the Lend-Lease program<sup>3</sup>. Additionally, the US had records of the Turkish Embassy in Washington signing off on all of the shipments.<sup>4</sup> This mutual aid agreement was intended to provide an avenue for Americans to provide aid to Turkey, as the initial Lend-Lease agreement of 1941 had been suspended during the war when Turkey signed a neutrality and nonaggression pact with Germany in 1943.<sup>5</sup> As the war continued, a new mutual aid and assistance agreement provided the US and Turkey with the opportunity to strengthen their alliance and Turkey's defense capabilities. Additionally, at the end of June 1945, the UK officially told Turkey that it would not make Turkey pay for Lend-Lease items that had been manufactured in the United States. <sup>6</sup> Collaboration on mutual aid helped pave the way for enhanced cooperation between the US and Turkey.

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<sup>3</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1272. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1272>

<sup>4</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1273. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1273>

<sup>5</sup> Fahir Armaoğlu, *Belgelerle Türk-Amerikan Münasebetleri*. (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basimevi, 1991), 135.

<sup>6</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1282. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1282>

### *Treaty of Friendship*

Turkish-American relations developed with both parties considering other prominent global actors. The Soviet Union played a significant role in initial relations towards the end of World War II, and Turkish-Soviet relations heavily impacted the direction of Turkish-American relations.

As the US and Turkey began to strengthen their relations, the relationship between the Soviet Union and Turkey soured. In 1925, the Soviet Union and the Republic of Turkey had signed a Treaty of Friendship and Nonaggression, which was up for renewal in 1945.<sup>7</sup> If neither party had done anything, the treaty would have automatically renewed for a two-year period. However, the Soviets sought to denounce the treaty, not as an act of aggression, but in hopes that the treaty could be renegotiated, culminating in key changes that would be more favorable to Soviet security and prestige.<sup>8</sup> The Soviets reasoned that the treaty was ‘out of date and required revision.’<sup>9</sup> The Turkish Government suspected that the Soviets intended to use a revision of the treaty as an opportunity to suggest altering the Montreux Convention, which had several components the Soviets found problematic. The Montreux Convention of 1936 concerned the Bosphorus Straits. It clarified which parties were allowed to pass through the Straits during peace time and war time, as well as who was responsible for the maintenance and

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<sup>7</sup> Oral Sander, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Yayınları, 1979), 4.

<sup>8</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1185. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1185>

<sup>9</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1183. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1183>

protection of the Straits, namely Turkey. The Soviet Union opposed the Turks having sole control over the Straits, which they claimed to be a serious security issue.<sup>10</sup> As the Straits are the only warm water passage from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean Sea, the Soviet Union justifiably saw access to the Straits as a critical issue. In order to acquire greater access to the Straits, the Soviets began a disinformation campaign about the Turks. In 1945, they began a ‘war of nerves’<sup>11</sup> wherein they spread rumors, seeking to put pressure on the Turks. For example, they indicated there were many Soviet troops amassing on the Bulgarian border with Turkey, but according to Turkish and British intelligence, that was completely untrue.<sup>12</sup>

#### *War of Nerves/Disinformation*

Throughout early 1945, Turkey asserted that it would not be coerced by the Soviet war of nerves. Turkish Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Selim Sarper, communicated Turkey’s resistance to Soviet demands by reminding his American counterparts that Turkey had firmly rejected Russian and German demands in 1939 and had no reason to

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<sup>10</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII*, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1240. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1240>

<sup>11</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII*, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1260. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1260>

<sup>12</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII*, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1188. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1188>

bend to Soviet demands at this time.<sup>13</sup> In a discussion with Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyacheslav Molotov, Sargent reiterated that the Montreux Convention did not merely concern Russia and Turkey, but other states as well. Therefore, Turkey would not allow Soviet bases in the Straits.<sup>14</sup> The British asserted their belief that the Soviets would prefer a rupture in the Anglo-Turkish alliance and might give up other demands if that were to happen, although neither the British nor the Turks intended for such a rupture to occur. The Turks also believed that the Soviets intended to encourage a new political regime in Turkey in order to ‘reorient’ Turkey in the same way Romania and Bulgaria had been ‘reoriented.’<sup>15</sup>

While the US did not anticipate Russian military action against Turkey, the Russian people were being told by their own government that the USSR might go to war with Turkey.<sup>16</sup> Despite the fact that military action against Turkey was unlikely, American advisors viewed internal Soviet propaganda with hesitancy. They considered it possible that this constituted a continued effort in the ‘war of nerves’ or that the USSR was spreading these rumors for the benefit of its domestic population, to encourage them

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<sup>13</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1196. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1196>

<sup>14</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1198. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1198>

<sup>15</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1199. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1199>

<sup>16</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1215. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1215>

to continue military production. Whatever the motivation, American Charge in the Soviet Union, George Kennan, saw this propaganda as a cause for concern.<sup>17</sup>

The American Ambassador in the Soviet Union, W. Averell Harriman, considered it likely that the Soviet Union would feel vulnerable until it maintained control of both Turkey and the Black Sea, and that it might try to disrupt Turkey's Armenian and Kurdish populations to achieve this end.<sup>18</sup> This was due, in part, to a lack of significant leftist opposition in Turkey. The likelihood of stirring discontent within Turkey was stronger if minority communities, rather than ideological minorities, were targeted. Dating back to the Ottoman Empire, both the Armenian and Kurdish communities had been treated differently than Turkish communities, in many ways creating large social disparities in the communities. Additionally, once the Republic of Turkey was founded, policies such as the language reform movement led to increased discrimination against these populations, as they were no longer allowed to use their native languages to communicate in any official sense. Turkish concern about Russian conspiracy in the Armenian population dated back to the Ottoman Empire as well, resulting in increased discrimination against the Armenians, including deportations and forced marches by entire communities of Armenians in 1915.<sup>19</sup> Yet the Americans viewed potential Soviet

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1945, Europe, Volume V, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 681. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v05/d681>

<sup>19</sup> Janet Klein, *The Margins of Empire: Kurdish Militias in the Ottoman Tribal Zone* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011).



success in inciting these groups as negligible.<sup>20</sup> In part, this perspective came from lack of evidence that the Soviets had worked to arm these groups. Yet, the Americans continued to consider these particular minority communities as potential areas for Soviet influence because the Soviets continued to attempt to incite them.

Additional Soviet disinformation from Soviets was identified via encounters with both Bulgarian and Greek diplomats. In a meeting between the Turkish Prime Minister İsmet İnönü and the Bulgarian Minister Antonoff, discussions about Turko-Soviet relations and the potential for their improvement took place. Antonoff sought to encourage the Turkish government to make efforts to improve its relations with the Soviet government, particularly because the USSR might consider creating a pact among the Black Sea Powers, including Greece and Turkey.<sup>21</sup> By relaying this message through the Bulgarian Minister, the Soviets were able to maintain a distance from the proposal and gauge potential Turkish interest and cooperation in the event they pursued that option. Additionally, the USSR approached the Greek government to relay a message to Turkey that the only way the Black Sea Powers could maintain safety and security would be through joint Soviet-Turkish control of the Straits.<sup>22</sup> Although the Greek Ambassador indicated to the Soviet Ambassador that the Turkish government would assuredly reject

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<sup>20</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1945, Europe, Volume V, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 681. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v05/d681>

<sup>21</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1246. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1246>

<sup>22</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1248. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1248>

such a proposal, the Soviet Ambassador responded that this position might change “under certain conditions,” insinuating that Turkey might change its position under enough Soviet pressure.<sup>23</sup> This kind of thinly veiled threat would become more commonplace throughout the late 1940s as Turkey’s relationship with the US strengthened and Turkey continued to resist Soviet pressure and expansion.

Towards the end of 1945, the Soviet Union began a program that directly impacted Turkey and its Armenian population. The USSR invited Armenians outside of Soviet Armenia to relocate to Soviet Armenia. The majority of applications came from Turkey and Iran; yet the Turkish government did not seem very concerned with this development.<sup>24</sup> Ambassador Wilson speculated that Soviet intentions behind this policy were to overpopulate Soviet Armenia, potentially strengthening the USSR’s claims on Kars and Ardahan.<sup>25</sup> Near the end of December, 1945, nearly 1500 Armenians from Turkey had applied to relocate to Armenia.<sup>26</sup> Although this policy could have had severe implications for Turkey’s territorial sovereignty, the Turks were not heavily concerned about a mass exodus of Armenians. However, Georgian claims to part of Turkey’s territory concerned them greatly. Near the end of 1945, the Soviet press put forth a claim

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1261. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1261>

<sup>25</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason, (Washington, United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1258. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1258>

<sup>26</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1261. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1261>

on behalf of Soviet Georgia for the Turkish Black Sea coast.<sup>27</sup> As this introduced yet another territorial claim, the Turkish government viewed this development with apprehension. This claim continued the Soviet war of nerves on Turkey in order to pressure Turkey into relinquishing sole control over the Straits.

### *Montreux Convention*

The Montreux Convention had established rules for passage through the Dardanelles and allowed Turkey to remilitarize the Bosphorus.<sup>28</sup> At the Potsdam Conference of 1945, Stalin attempted to revise the terms of the Montreux Convention to allow free passage of Soviet warships at all times. He shared his reasoning by stating that Turkey “had a hand on Russia’s throat,” because the Turks had full control over the Straits and could close them at any time.<sup>29</sup> Both Turkey and the United States were wary of Soviet requests. The Soviet revisions to the Montreux Convention agreed upon by the US at the Potsdam Conference are as follows:

1. The Straits should always be open to the passage of merchant ships of all countries.
2. The Straits should always be open to the passage of warships of the Black Sea Powers.

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<sup>27</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1260. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1260>

<sup>28</sup> Fahir Armaoğlu, *Belgelerle Türk-Amerikan Münasebetleri*. (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1991), 128-9.

<sup>29</sup> Armaoğlu, *Belgelerle Türk-Amerikan Münasebetleri*, 129.

3. Passage through the Straits for warships not belonging to the Black Sea Powers shall not be permitted except in cases specially provided for.<sup>30</sup>

However, the US disagreed with the USSR about two crucial points: that the Straits should be available only to Black Sea powers and about who was responsible for the defense of the Straits. The US advocated for Turkey to have sole control over the protection of the Straits while the USSR wanted joint control.<sup>31</sup> At Potsdam, the Three Powers agreed that the Montreux Convention should be revised, and that each power should speak with Turkey separately about terms of the revision.<sup>32</sup>

The United States began considering the revision of the Montreux Convention and sought to acquire the Turkish opinion on potential options for revision. Turkey responded by asserting that American interest in Turkey was waning, citing examples such as American refusal to work with the British about Russian demands on Turkey, and calling American discussions with Russia ‘friendly,’ which the Turkish government found to be problematic.<sup>33</sup> The Turks interpreted the US’s failure to take a stronger position on Russian claims to Turkish territory as the US appeasing the Soviet Union and compared this appeasement to the appeasement of Hitler’s territorial demands. Additionally, the US advocacy for the Straits to allow “unrestricted commerce of vessels of all kinds” was interpreted by the Turks as allowing no way for Turkey to protect itself

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<sup>30</sup> Armaoğlu, *Belgelerle Türk-Amerikan Münasebetleri*, 133.

<sup>31</sup> Armaoğlu, *Belgelerle Türk-Amerikan Münasebetleri*, 149.

<sup>32</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1200. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1200>

<sup>33</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1203. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1203>

from Russia “sailing its entire Black Sea fleet into the Sea of Marmora at any time, leveling its guns at Istanbul, and presenting Turkey with demands.”<sup>34</sup> Another concern for the Turks came by way of President Truman’s speech after the Potsdam Conference. In the speech, Truman spoke about international waterways and criticized states that used these waterways ‘selfishly,’ listing examples such as the Rhine, the Danube, the Kiel Canal, and the Straits. Due to his inclusion of the Straits with three Axis waterways, the Turkish Government feared that the United States did not consider Turkey to be one of its allies, despite the fact that Turkey had kept Hitler from accessing the Caucasus and the Suez Canal through use of Turkish land.<sup>35</sup> These complaints resulted in repeated assurance from the American Ambassador that US policy and opinion towards Turkey had not changed.<sup>36</sup>

The Soviet Union strongly opposed the idea of the internationalization of the Straits, and it stood to benefit more from waiting for regime change in Turkey rather than pressing the issue in the moment.<sup>37</sup> The Soviets had time on their side in this issue, as they had a beneficial position under the Montreux Convention as it stood. If the Soviets could encourage a friendlier government in Turkey that would be willing to renegotiate the terms of the Convention as well as other bilateral issues, it would present the ideal scenario for the USSR. Therefore, their preferred strategy was to wait for a more

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1221. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1221>

favorable moment to press the issue. However, they continued to be displeased with the Convention and had a strong interest in acquiring control of the Straits.

The American position on the Convention indicated that the Straits should not be neutralized or demilitarized unless the US was willing to guarantee support for Turkey's territorial integrity, which Secretary of State Dean Acheson believed required Congressional support.<sup>38</sup> As neutralizing or demilitarizing the Straits would impair Turkey's ability to defend itself, the US believed that was an unfair request unless the US was willing to offer a guarantee; but offering a guarantee posed a big risk to the US as well. Therefore, it was determined that the US would not propose neutralization or demilitarization of the Straits. The US also had a vested interest in keeping the USSR from expanding and saw this as an opportunity to act. According to the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

Russia has so far succeeded in obtaining her demands because she has the might, if not always the right, on her side and has convinced the other powers that in the case of Poland, the Baltic States, Bessarabia and Ruthenia, she would seize by force what was not granted by her agreement. The current demands and proposals of Russia, however, are not in exactly the same category. While it is true that the United States and Great Britain could not successfully oppose a determined Russian effort to seize [the Bosphorus and certain Turkish areas in northeast Turkey] by force, it is also true that as Russian demands progress farther afield, her power to seize her objectives progressively declines, and there is a diminishing ration of return to risk and effort...we should give full weight to the fact that she is war-weary, over-extended by her great efforts and in need of years to reestablish her economy, consolidate her gains and recoup

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<sup>38</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII*, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1205.<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1205>

her losses, a process in which she requires the substantial support and assistance of the United States.<sup>39</sup>

By mid-September, it became clear to the State Department that the UK and USSR intended to wait to approach Turkey until after the US approached Turkey.<sup>40</sup> The US decided to submit its proposal to Turkey and notify the UK and USSR of its actions.<sup>41</sup> The US proposal responded to what American strategists predicted about Soviet intentions regarding the Straits. As air power was sufficient to keep the USSR out of the Straits, the US determined that was not their true objective.<sup>42</sup> Regime change in Turkey would serve to grant the Soviet Union the sphere of influence and security it desired, making regime change its more likely objective.

Throughout 1945, the US placed heavy emphasis on maintaining Turkey's territorial integrity and sovereignty, while not creating conflict with the Soviet Union. The US had strong opposition to the USSR's claims on the Bosphorus Straits, Kars, and Ardahan. However, at this point the US did not have a strong interest in allying with Turkey directly. The US found it much more productive to keep Turkey relatively neutral and in order to maintain American access through the Straits and in the Eastern Mediterranean.

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<sup>39</sup> Armaoğlu, *Belgelerle Türk-Amerikan Münasebetleri*, 138.

<sup>40</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1208. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1208>

<sup>41</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1212. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1212>

<sup>42</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers*, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII, eds. E. Ralph Perkins and S. Everett Gleason, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1210. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1210>

### *Turkish Opinion about Tensions with USSR*

In preparation for the Three Power Conference in Moscow in 1946, the United States assured Turkey that the issue of the Straits was not on the agenda.<sup>43</sup> Turkey had concerns about the Soviets making demands about their position regarding the Straits without a Turkish representative present. As the war of nerves continued against Turkey, Ambassadors Wilson and Erkin clarified that the Turkish government was doing what it could to prevent any Turkish aggression towards the USSR.<sup>44</sup> The Turkish government recognized that in this scenario, aggression towards the USSR would only serve to escalate tensions which it sought to avoid. The Turkish Government assured the US that Turkey stood completely united against Soviet demands. Prime Minister Şükrü Saraçoğlu believed that the USSR had received misinformation from its agents inside Turkey that indicated Turkey might be ready to soften to Soviet demands.<sup>45</sup> However, Saraçoğlu insisted this that was inaccurate and that Turkey would not cave to Soviet pressure.

When asked what Turkey would do in the event of an attack by the USSR, Erkin stated, “if Turkey [was] doomed [to] disappear as [a] result [of] Soviet aggression, chances for rebirth [of an] independent Turkey [are] much greater if she resists and goes

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<sup>43</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 623.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d623>

<sup>44</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 624.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d624>

<sup>45</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 626.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d626>



down honorably rather than disappear as [a] result [of] attempting appeasement and becoming Soviet satellite.”<sup>46</sup>

The tensions between the USSR and Turkey continued into September. The Turkish Government viewed the Soviet Union as posing a legitimate threat to Turkey’s sovereignty. In a discussion between Ambassador Wilson and Turkish Foreign Minister Saka in September of 1946, Saka outlined three options he believed the Soviets had regarding Turkey: to attack Turkey, to attempt to convene an international conference to revise the Montreux Convention, or do nothing for the time being and wait for a better opportunity to press the issue.<sup>47</sup> Saka viewed the third option as the most likely route for the Soviets to take. Because of the persisting Soviet threat to Turkish sovereignty and security, the US worked to develop a new policy regarding Turkey and Turkish security throughout 1946.<sup>48</sup> The State Department decided that in order to act most efficiently in Turkey, it would be necessary to consider the political, economic, and military considerations in Turkey that went beyond the existing memorandum from the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

As tensions continued, the USSR reverted to its propaganda campaign against Turkey. By spreading rumors about Turkey and emphasizing its perceived failures in

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<sup>46</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 646.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d646>

<sup>47</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 677.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d677>

<sup>48</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 157.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d157>

implementing the Convention, it sought to undermine Turkey's credibility throughout the region.<sup>49</sup>

### *Escalating Tensions*

In early 1946, due to widely held frustrations about the USSR's aggression, the Turkish press vehemently attacked the Soviet Union, with offensive headlines reading "Machiavelism now Molotovism" and "Stalin is doing what Hitler did", resulting in Soviet irritation towards the Turkish press.<sup>50</sup> The Turkish government expressed regret about what the Turkish press had published, but also took the opportunity to remind Soviet leaders of many instances in which the Soviet press had disparaged Turkey or spread false information regarding Turkey.<sup>51</sup> This did not alleviate tensions between the two states.

The Turkish press continued to attack the USSR, with which the Soviets took issue. Instead of expressing regret as the Turkish government had on an earlier occasion, Ambassador Erkin indicated that the Soviet press "broke the truce" and stated that the Turkish press would behave when the Soviets behaved.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 684.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d684>

<sup>50</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 629.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d629>

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 635.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d635>

Throughout 1946, the USSR made attempts to connect with the Kurdish populations within Turkey in order to sow discord within the country. However, the Soviets did not have a lot of success in this endeavor. Through the press, the USSR advocated for an autonomous Kurdistan, but because of the Kurds' location in eastern Turkey and the Soviets' lack of ability to arm Turkish Kurds, this policy did not prove useful to them.<sup>53</sup>

Unfortunately, Soviet troop positioning along Turkish borders required the Turks to maintain a large army, which negatively impacted Turkey's economy.<sup>54</sup> A significant portion of Turkey's budget went to the Turkish Armed Forces, prohibiting the government from having the funds to develop the economy in the post-war arena.

In mid-March 1946, Turkey received reports of Soviet troop movement in northern Iran. This was not an immediate concern because wet roads would temporarily prevent the troops from being able to continue moving, at least until the roads dried up.<sup>55</sup> It was possible that these troop movements were part of the continued war of nerves against Turkey. The US assured Turkey that it would back Turkey in the case of foreign

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<sup>53</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 648.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d648>

<sup>54</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 627.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d627>

<sup>55</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 641.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d641>

aggression, but reminded the Turkish government that it could not offer Turkey a blank check for this issue.<sup>56</sup>

At this time, Turkey had to consider whether or not it wanted to reduce its military. As Turkey used a system of conscription, leaders had to consider what they would do with their upcoming class of cadets.<sup>57</sup> Maintaining a large military was incredibly costly for the government, but with the USSR looming on Turkey's borders, the large military could be worth the significant cost.

#### *American aid: Loans and materials*

In light of potential military conflict with the USSR, Turkey expressed concerns about its lack of military materials and requested immediate assistance from the US, to which the US Ambassador to Turkey, Edwin Wilson, agreed. Turkey required mostly transport vehicles and materials, including 3,000 trucks, 1,000 automobiles and 45 tires.<sup>58</sup> Additionally, Wilson observed that Turkey's existing transport materials were in bad condition and would require replacements in the near future.<sup>59</sup> In response, the Secretary of State authorized all Lend-Lease stores in the Middle East to be transferred to Turkey,

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<sup>56</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 642.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d642>

<sup>57</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 724.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d724>

<sup>58</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 703.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d703>

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

which would help to alleviate the situation.<sup>60</sup> Ambassador Wilson also reiterated the strength of American concern about Turkey's territorial integrity and security in a conversation with Saka.<sup>61</sup> In February 1946, the US provided Turkey with the opportunity to purchase surplus equipment and felt it necessary to alert the USSR, in hopes that the USSR would not find this development suspicious.<sup>62</sup>

The US reiterated that it would sell Turkey “such reasonable amounts of arms and equipment as they might wish to buy.”<sup>63</sup> The US found it important to make sure Turkey did not appear to become aggressive towards the USSR, even though it did not find that to be a likely scenario, especially in the near future. Therefore, selling Turkey arms was a mutually beneficial situation, as these arms sales would improve Turkey's defensive capabilities.

The US realized that Turkish opinion and perception of the aid received relative to American aid given to other countries was an important consideration. Because of this,

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<sup>60</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 704.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d704>

<sup>61</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 633.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d633>

<sup>62</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 705.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d705>

<sup>63</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, General; The United Nations, Volume I, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1972), Document 588.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v01/d588>

it began to look for other ways to continue granting aid to Turkey, particularly through Bretton Woods institutions.<sup>64</sup>

As of May 1946, the ExImBank was the only source of financial aid to Turkey. In a discussion with Foreign Service Officer Loy Henderson, the Turkish Ambassador requested a \$25 million loan. Henderson indicated that there was a possibility that this loan would be granted, but it absolutely would not exceed that amount. As Turkey differed from other European countries, since it had not been completely demolished by World War II, Henderson reasoned that Turkey might have some luck acquiring private loans. However, he indicated he would pursue the possibility of the US granting Turkey the requested loan.<sup>65</sup>

In June, Henderson called for a credit ceiling of \$25 million for Turkey.<sup>66</sup> As the Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs, his proposal held weight and was thus taken into consideration.

The US continued to wish for the UK to provide Turkey with additional military equipment, as the US remained only interested in providing economic support to

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<sup>64</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 708.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d708>

<sup>65</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 712.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d712>

<sup>66</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 3.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d3>

Turkey.<sup>67</sup> The Turkish government also had plans to ask the US for additional loans and military equipment, which the US considered important, because it viewed Greece and Turkey as the only obstacles for the USSR.<sup>68</sup> While the US did not have an understanding as to why the UK would not provide these arms to Turkey, it found Turkey's need for combat materials to be important enough to potentially be willing to arm the Turks, despite its preference to assist Turkey in a purely economic capacity.

#### *Kars/Ardahan/Straits*

In response to Soviet pressures to revise the Montreux Convention, the US suggested that an international conference might be ideal, and that the US would willingly participate if invited to such a conference. The US did not indicate interest in calling for such a conference.<sup>69</sup>

Turkey remained apprehensive due to Soviet claims for Turkish territories in Kars and Ardahan. Although the USSR had made these claims previously, the Soviet government explicitly brought up the need to discuss these territories in conjunction with

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<sup>67</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 155.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d155>

<sup>68</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 697.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d697>

<sup>69</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 628.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d628>

talks to renew the Treaty of Friendship in 1946.<sup>70</sup> The Soviet Union made allegations that Kars and Ardahan shared similarities with Azerbaijan, but the Turks did not feel that this was an accurate assessment of the situation. The Turks argued that Kars and Ardahan were populated by Turks who spoke Turkish and who did not take issue with the central government of Turkey, which had not been the situation when Azerbaijan wished to separate from Persia.<sup>71</sup> In a conversation held by the Secretary of State with the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Saka assured the Secretary of State that,

while the character of the Turkish people as a whole was to be patient, if the Soviet Govt used any pretext to bring about the seizure of the eastern provinces or any other Turkish territory, the Turkish people would meet such a situation with firm resolution and [Saka] was sure the result would be armed conflict. [Saka] said further that he could give me every assurance that the Turkish Govt would give no occasion whatever for provocation in the present situation but that the Govt and people in Turkey were firmly resolved to resist any attempt to take their territory by force.<sup>72</sup>

These assurances demonstrated consistency in Turkish resolve to reject Soviet expansionism and became an attitude that American diplomats came to respect and rely on as Turkish-American relations continued to develop.

In continued discussions about renewing the Treaty of Friendship, the topic of conversation reverted to Kars and Ardahan. When confronted with the fact that the border between Turkey and the USSR had been determined in 1921, Soviet Ambassador Sergei

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<sup>70</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 630. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d630>

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.



Vinogradov remarked that Russia was weak at that time, so the treaty required renewed attention.<sup>73</sup> In a following conversation with Turkish Foreign Minister Sümer, Vinogradov explicitly threatened Sümer after Sümer rejected his proposals for Soviet participation in defense of the Straits. Insisting the USSR could not withdraw its request for joint control over the Straits in consideration of its own security, Vinogradov stated, “We waited long time regarding arrangement we wanted with Poland and finally got it; we can wait regarding Turkey.”<sup>74</sup> This veiled threat came in the same conversation in which Vinogradov placed the blame for poor Turkish-Soviet relations on Turkish reluctance to work with the Soviets on defense of the Straits.

After discussing revisions to the Montreux Convention with the United States, the Turks expressed their agreements with the US proposal and indicated they would like to proceed with those revisions.<sup>75</sup>

The US also expressed frustration about Soviet claims to Kars and Ardahan, especially considering that Stalin had drawn the border with Turkey.<sup>76</sup> At the time of negotiations, Turkey and Russia had argued about the areas of Batum and Kars. Stalin drew the border between the two regions that were denoted in the treaty.

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<sup>73</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 636.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d636>

<sup>74</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 637.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d637>

<sup>75</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 636.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d636>

<sup>76</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 638.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d638>

At the beginning of March, Sümer and Vinogradov held another meeting where they discussed the state of Turkish-Soviet relations. Vinogradov asserted that the UK and Turkey had allied to oppose the USSR, which Sümer asserted was not accurate. According to Sümer, the UK wanted to see better relations between Turkey and the USSR, including a renewal of the treaty of friendship because it would have contributed to positive relations between all three countries.<sup>77</sup> Vinogradov responded that if Turkey wished to renew discussions about a treaty of friendship, the conditions under which the USSR would be willing to talk were already clear. Sümer clarified that Turkey had not asked for a treaty of friendship, but did want friendly relations with the USSR, as they neighbored each other. After this point, Vinogradov made a statement indicating that if Turkey relinquished Kars and Ardahan, it would “be more than compensated elsewhere.”<sup>78</sup> Sümer clearly stated that Turkey was not interested in trading territories and the subject was dropped. The discussion ended in a professional, but unresolved manner.<sup>79</sup> This example of discussions between Turkey and the USSR at this point in time elucidates the difficult position in which Turkey found itself. It was evident that the USSR had clear objectives in mind that it sought to achieve and that it did not have an interest in relinquishing them. The USSR had the willingness to wait and press the issue again in the future.

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<sup>77</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 639.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d639>

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

Throughout April, the USSR assured the US it had no intentions of attacking Turkey.<sup>80</sup> However, all parties were aware of the risk that having no control over the Straits posed to the Soviet Union. In discussions with the USSR, the US proposed the possibility of the UN administering security in the Straits and the Dardanelles, to which the USSR did not respond negatively to.<sup>81</sup> However, this never came to fruition because the US prioritized Turkish sovereignty over the Straits while the USSR prioritized acquiring its own control over the Straits.

The USSR continued to apply pressure on Turkey, with Stalin insisting that without a Russian base somewhere in the Mediterranean, the freedom of passage through the Straits provided little value to the Soviets.<sup>82</sup> The USSR continued to ask for bilateral talks with Turkey regarding the Straits, which Turkey was hesitant to accept.<sup>83</sup>

August brought renewed conversations and considerations about Soviet-Turkish relations. Continuing to protest the Montreux Convention, the Soviet Union sent a note to Turkey detailing all the ways in which Turkey had failed to uphold the Convention during the second World War. The Soviets intended for this to serve as a reasonable explanation for their concerns about the Convention as it stood. In this letter, the Soviets brought up three specific examples: a German patrol boat was allowed through the Straits

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<sup>80</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, Eastern Europe, The Soviet Union, Volume VI, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 494.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v06/d494>

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 647.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d647>

<sup>83</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 649.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d649>

into the Black Sea in July 1941; an Italian auxiliary war vessel was allowed to pass through the Straits to the Black Sea in August 1941; and German warships disguised as merchant vessels were allowed through the Straits to the Black Sea.<sup>84</sup> The USSR held that each of these examples served as a violation of the Montreux Convention. Turkey's failure to abide by the Convention during a time of war solidified the Soviet perspective that it should have joint control over the Bosphorus.

However, the US responded by detailing the ways in which the Soviet note was either incorrect or misrepresented events. According to the US, all of these vessels were borderline under the Convention's definitions of war vessels, and they were all disguised as merchant vessels. Additionally, the US asserted that, "in general the Turks in the period of Axis ascendancy were stiffly correct, favoring neither side; as Allied fortunes mounted the Turks interpreted the Montreux Convention more and more to favor the Allies."<sup>85</sup> By defending Turkey's implementation of the Convention, the US continued to develop its support for Turkey's sole control over the Straits. American support on this issue also served to show the capacity for interpretation, as the Americans had a very different perspective on these individual events than did the Soviets.

Additionally, due to continued Soviet pressure about revising the Convention, Turkey determined it would no longer talk with the USSR about the Straits or about the

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<sup>84</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 650.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d650>

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

note that the Soviets had sent to Turkey regarding the Straits.<sup>86</sup> Because the Soviets were continuously unyielding on their intended revisions, the Turkish government did not find it productive to continue to discuss their conditions with the Soviets.

Although Turkey considered discussions with the USSR about the Montreux Convention to be over, the Soviets had a different viewpoint.<sup>87</sup> They intended to keep the door for discussions open and were optimistic that a new Turkish Ambassador to the USSR would be open to discussing the Straits; but the Turkish government assured the US that it did not intend for that to be the case.<sup>88</sup>

#### *Turkish-American speculation about Soviet motives*

The US and Turkey speculated heavily about Soviet intentions with regard to Turkey. A popular speculation indicated that the USSR's primary goal was to end the Anglo-Turkish alliance, although Soviet Ambassador Vinogradov asserted that was not a Soviet goal.<sup>89</sup> It was also considered possible that the Soviets merely wanted control over the Straits, which the US found problematic because it thought the Straits constituted an

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<sup>86</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 681.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d681>

<sup>87</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 698.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d698>

<sup>88</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 700.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d700>

<sup>89</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 634.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d634>

international issue.<sup>90</sup> This view drew support from discussions with Bulgarian Ambassador Antonoff, who asserted that the most important area, from the Soviet viewpoint, concerned an agreement with Turkey about the Straits.

In early 1946, the Bulgarian Minister Antonoff invited Turkish Acting Foreign Minister Sümer to dinner, where he brought up Turkish-Soviet relations and their potential for improvement. In this discussion, Antonoff asserted that the issues harming Turkish-Soviet relations stemmed from the Turkish government, and that if Saraçoğlu were to replace İnönü as the head of government, many of those issues would be solved.<sup>91</sup> Sümer immediately reported this to Erkin, who chose to call Antonoff in for a meeting, where he confronted Antonoff about this discussion. Throughout this discussion, Antonoff insisted that the views he presented were only personal in nature and that he had brought it up because he felt the solidity of Turkish-Soviet relations heavily impacted Bulgarian security.<sup>92</sup> The Turkish government considered this to be yet another tactic by the Soviets in their war of nerves.<sup>93</sup>

Meanwhile the US attempted to predict why and how the USSR chose states on which to exert pressure. The US determined that reasons included situations where governments “directly oppose Soviet foreign policy aims...where they seal their territories off against Communist penetration...or where they compete too strongly...for

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 631. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d631>

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

moral domination among elements which it is important for Communists to dominate.”<sup>94</sup> With this hypothesis, US diplomats attempted to understand Soviet pressure and its implementation, particularly in Turkey, where these factors were in play.

In light of the fact that air power made control of the Straits less important than it had been at the time the Montreux Convention was signed, Ambassador Wilson indicated to the US Secretary of State that Soviet aim was actually domination of Turkey.<sup>95</sup> The Soviets used the Straits as a pretext to claim territorial sovereignty over the Straits, but Ambassador Wilson believed it would be more advantageous for the Soviets to manufacture a Turkey that was friendly to the USSR. This distinction played an important role in the continued calculus of Soviet intentions with regard to pursuing bilateral negotiations with Turkey about the Straits and renewing the Treaty of Friendship.

These developments led to greater discussion between the US and Turkey and within the US about Soviet intentions pertaining to Turkey. Although Stalin, unprompted by questions, said three times in a meeting with Czech leaders that the Soviets would not attack Turkey, US advisers still saw the Soviet Union as a serious threat.<sup>96</sup> Therefore they

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<sup>94</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, Volume VI, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 475.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v06/d475>

<sup>95</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 643.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d643>

<sup>96</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 655.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d655>

considered it vital to show Turkey support. The US actors continued to view the Soviet proposals for the Convention as incompatible with Turkish sovereignty.<sup>97</sup>

### *Strengthening Turkish-American Ties*

In 1946, Turkish Ambassador to the United States, Münir Ertegün, passed away and the US sent the USSR Missouri to carry his body back to Turkey, sailing into the Black Sea as a show of American friendship with Turkey.<sup>98</sup> This decision positively impacted the psychological aspects of Turkish-American relations and had a powerful effect on other regional actors, signaling to the USSR in particular that the US intended to ally more strongly with Turkey. According to Ambassador Wilson, “there are already indications that the effects of the *Missouri* visit are being felt beyond Turk frontiers...the *Missouri* visit is thus apt to take on character of one of those imponderable events influence of which extends far beyond [the] immediate theater in which it occurs.”<sup>99</sup>

The US continued to prioritize its relations with Turkey, and US diplomats took opportunities to reiterate American commitment to developing a friendship with Turkey. For example, in a chance meeting between US Secretary Byrnes and the Turkish Ambassador to Paris, Byrnes indicated the US’s deep interest in Turkey’s problems and

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<sup>97</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 671. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d671>

<sup>98</sup> Sait Yılmaz, *Türkiye’deki Amerika: ikili ilişkiler ve ABD’nin örtülü operasyonları*, (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 2014).

<sup>99</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 644. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d644>



continued intention for a friendship with Turkey, to which the Turkish Ambassador responded positively.<sup>100</sup>

As the US realized it would likely be collaborating more significantly with Greece and Turkey because of their relationship with the UK, it took the position that it would be beneficial for states surrounding Turkey to see American warships in the Mediterranean and at Greek and Turkish ports so they could begin to perceive US presence as a regular occurrence, not a particular political or diplomatic gesture.<sup>101</sup>

Overall, 1946 was characterized by the American attempt to decide whether or not it was willing to step up to defend Turkey in the event of a Soviet incursion.<sup>102</sup> The UK and the USSR fundamentally clashed in the Middle East due to their contradictory goals and desires. The US found itself involved in this clash as the Cold War began to develop and saw its role in the Middle East as simply upholding the principles of the United Nations.<sup>103</sup> As the US became more directly involved in Turkey's economic and military situations in the next years, its policy concerning defending Turkey in the event of a Soviet attack became clearer, eventually culminating in Turkey's accession into

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<sup>100</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 645.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d645>

<sup>101</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 686.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d686>

<sup>102</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, The Near East and Africa, Volume VII, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), Document 1.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v07/d1>

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

NATO. However, at the end of 1946, this future position could not have been predicted by US policy makers.

## Chapter 2: Where Things Start to Get Serious

1947 brought the first significant indication of change in Turkish-American relations: the implementation of the Truman Doctrine. The Truman Doctrine explicitly set out to provide Turkey with consistent aid, which previously had not been a factor in relations between these states. Additionally, the Truman Doctrine and additional aid packages enhanced Turkish-American relations because it served as an example of the US's prioritization of its association with Turkey. Events in 1947-1949 paved the way for the deeply integrated alliance that would come in the 1950s.

### *US/UK collaboration*

1947 began with continued consideration of Soviet intentions and optimal US involvement in Turkey, both economically and militarily. In January, the Soviets dislodged politically from Azerbaijan, but the US did not think this meant the USSR would decrease its advances on Turkey.<sup>104</sup> The Ambassador in the Soviet Union believed that the Soviets wanted free, independent naval access to the Mediterranean and that they would continue to operate to achieve that goal.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V*, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 2. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d2>

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

As Soviet intentions would not likely change, the US acknowledged that Turkey would need continued, long term support from both the US and the UK.<sup>106</sup> However, the US was unwilling to provide military equipment to Turkey at that time. The US felt that due to the UK's history of involvement with Turkey, the UK had continued responsibility of military aid.<sup>107</sup> The US also reiterated to the Turkish government that Turkey, not any other state, should have primary responsibility over the Straits.<sup>108</sup> The US held strong opposition to the idea of proposing a regional defense agreement for the Straits to be made between Turkey, the US, the UK, and the USSR.<sup>109</sup> In the opinion of the Secretary of State, if the US agreed to participate in a regional arrangement to defend the Straits, that would confirm the Soviet view that Turkey alone could not adequately defend the Straits. A regional arrangement would reinvigorate diplomatic issues on an already contentious topic. To effectively support Turkish sovereignty, it was paramount that Turkey maintained primary responsibility over the Straits.

February 1947 showed that relations between Turkey, the US, and the UK were shifting in ways that would have serious lasting consequences. During this month, the UK informed the US that due to domestic financial issues, it could no longer afford to

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<sup>106</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V*, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 6.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d6>

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V*, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 7.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d7>

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

provide economic or military assistance to Greece or Turkey.<sup>110</sup> As Greece and Turkey were already considered vital to stopping Soviet expansion into the Mediterranean, the US viewed this development as a major concern. American advisors began to strategize on how they should respond to the pending reduction of funds for Greece and Turkey from the UK.

### *Public Law 75*

In American policy discussions, diplomats emphasized the importance of encouraging the American people to see the value assisting Greece and Turkey. They also considered how the US would provide this assistance with the required congressional support.<sup>111</sup> As any aid to Greece and Turkey would come from federal taxes, popular support for the initiative would substantially strengthen American capacity to provide aid to Greece and Turkey. Additionally, strong public support could facilitate congressional approval for aid. The US was very aware that agreeing to aid one of these states would require aiding the other; they came as a package deal.<sup>112</sup> Although the situations in both

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<sup>110</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 29.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d29>

<sup>111</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 28.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d28>

<sup>112</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 32.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d32>

states differed, the urgency with which they required aid was the same.<sup>113</sup> Both Greece and Turkey intended to avoid falling into the Soviet sphere of influence, but needed aid to ensure that did not happen. In discussions and meetings, emphasis was placed on the importance of Turkey to the United States and Turkey's proven usefulness in resisting Communism and Soviet pressure.<sup>114</sup> The continued Soviet war of nerves incentivized prompt US support to Turkey, as Turkey's economy was being tested by its continued maintenance of a large standing army. At the end of February 1947, President Truman approved of the plans to proceed in lending assistance to these states.<sup>115</sup>

As the situation continued to develop, Turkey continued to request military aid from the US. However, the US saw the USSR as the only real threat for Turkey, and it didn't anticipate any Soviet aggression in the near future.<sup>116</sup> The continuation of the war of nerves seemed much more likely, in the eyes of the Americans. Yet, the Americans were aware of the severe burden that maintaining Turkish armed forces placed on Turkey's economy and saw a need to modernize Turkish forces because of the extent to

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1972), Document 367.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v04/d367>

<sup>115</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 35.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d35>

<sup>116</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 58.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d58>

which their equipment was outdated.<sup>117</sup> President Truman approved aid to Greece and Turkey on March 5 and addressed Congress in a joint session on March 12.<sup>118</sup>

The US was aware of what Greece needed in terms of aid and wanted the UK to continue its training missions in Greece, but the UK indicated that its aid would cease on March 31.<sup>119</sup> The US did not know what Turkey needed in terms of aid and sought to figure out what it required.<sup>120</sup> As the US determined it would provide additional assistance to Greece and Turkey, American diplomats debated on whether or not to send a letter to the UN about its new plans.<sup>121</sup> The US prioritized international perception of its actions in Turkey and viewed communication with the UN about its intentions as a way to maintain its reputation as an honest broker. Ambassador Wilson informed the State Department that regardless of what the US decided in terms of details about aid, it should communicate openly with the Turkish government about all details.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 60.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d60>

<sup>118</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 62.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d62>

<sup>119</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 81.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d81>

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>121</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 89.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d89>

<sup>122</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 94.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d94>

One provision of American aid to Turkey stipulated that the US could monitor how the aid was utilized. This made the Turks averse to accepting the aid, as they saw this provision as an American attempt to exercise control within Turkey.<sup>123</sup> The US assured Turkey that this was not the case; it merely wanted to know how the aid would be implemented. As of April 7, \$400 million in aid to Greece and Turkey had obtained congressional approval.<sup>124</sup> The State Department indicated to Congress that aid to Greece and Turkey was urgent.<sup>125</sup> The State Department determined that most of the aid to Turkey should be used for military supplies and equipment, stepping away from the previous policy that only intended to provide economic aid.<sup>126</sup>

On May 9, the Bill on aid to Greece and Turkey passed in the House of Representatives.<sup>127</sup> In response to the continuation of this process, the USSR publicly let its displeasure be known. In a Soviet newspaper, the US was described as carrying a “bomb in one pocket and an Easter egg in other”, specifically in response to American

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<sup>123</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 103.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d103>

<sup>124</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The British Commonwealth; Europe, Volume III, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1972), Document 130.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v03/d130>

<sup>125</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The British Commonwealth; Europe, Volume III, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1972), Document 131.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v03/d131>

<sup>126</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 121.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d121>

<sup>127</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 129.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d129>



aid extended to Greece and Turkey.<sup>128</sup> This example sought to highlight perceived American hypocrisy for promoting democracy in Greece and Turkey while seeking to undermine the Soviet Union. The US prepared for Soviet retaliation to counter the Greece & Turkey bill.<sup>129</sup>

Following the passing of the Bill in the House, the USSR continued to disparage the US in the press, reminding the US that this policy did not do anything to restrain the USSR.<sup>130</sup> According to the Soviet paper *Pravda*, the “Americans at [the] same time showed complete disregard for Turkish sovereignty, entrusting to special military representatives not only determination of the program of works to be carried out on Turkish territory, but also the direction of their carrying out political tasks which are at the basis of ‘Truman Doctrine’ and which correspond admirably to interests American industrialists.”<sup>131</sup> Additionally, the paper asserted that “from a military viewpoint Turkey has ceased [to] be an independent country.”<sup>132</sup> However, the US establishment did not see itself as dictating how Turkey’s military and economy should develop.

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<sup>128</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1972), Document 384.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v04/d384>

<sup>129</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, General; The United Nations, Volume I, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1973), Document 389.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v01/d389>

<sup>130</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 157.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d157>

<sup>131</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 159.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d159>

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*

In contrast, the UK indicated a strong interest in determining what the Turkish military needed and how that should be implemented, but the US disagreed, believing Turkey needed to be involved in that discussion.<sup>133</sup> According to Ambassador Wilson, Turkey responded positively to the passage of the Truman Doctrine, both in the government and in public opinion. The Truman Doctrine indicated, to Turks, American dedication to upholding Turkey's sovereignty. Additionally, the anticipated military and economic aid stood to vastly improve Turkey's economy, which was positively received across the board.<sup>134</sup> The emphasis on aid to Turkey came from Turkey's need for modernization, which was where the US determined it would focus its efforts.

In July, the House approved the full budget of \$400 million.<sup>135</sup> The US determined how the aid would be appropriated between Greece and Turkey and came to conclusions about what Turkey needed in terms of assistance. For Turkey, the goal was to facilitate the Turkish armed forces to "provide a deterrent of such a nature to a potential

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<sup>133</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 153.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d153>

<sup>134</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 156.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d156>

<sup>135</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 193.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d193>

aggressor that an all-out costly war would be necessary for the aggressor, in order to realize territorial or political objectives in Turkey.”<sup>136</sup>

Soviet Marshal Bulganin, in a conversation with the Turkish Ambassador to Moscow, indicated his displeasure at Turkey’s continued reception of American aid. According to Bulganin, “Turkey had placed herself under American hegemony, was allowing the US Army [to] create bases in Turkey and [was] serving as instrument of US’s plans to prepare war against USSR.”<sup>137</sup>

#### *Turkey’s demobilization/modernization*

The US viewed Turkey not only as vital for the security of the Middle East as a whole, but also as a test case for the Middle East.<sup>138</sup> If Turkey acquired the capability to withstand Soviet pressure and maintain a positive relationship with western democracies, then it would be possible for other Middle Eastern states to do the same.

Foreign Minister Saka reached out to Ambassador Wilson to further discuss whether or not Turkey should reduce its armed forces. Turkey needed to quickly make a decision, as it would have to determine whether to call upon a new class of armed

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<sup>136</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 185.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d185>

<sup>137</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government, 1971), Document 340.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d340>

<sup>138</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 78.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d78>

forces.<sup>139</sup> The Turkish government stood divided on how to respond. Some members of government believed it was economically necessary to reduce forces, yet others continued to consider the international situation to be too dangerous to reduce the armed forces. Ambassador Wilson's view on the issue was that the Turks should continue to maintain their armed forces and consider a reduction after another year.<sup>140</sup>

In September, Turkey decided to demobilize one existing class from its military in order to improve the economic situation.<sup>141</sup> However, the demobilization did not solve Turkey's budget deficit, prompting Turkey to ask the US for additional aid.<sup>142</sup> The State Department approved the transfer of \$45,420,000 in aid to Turkey under the Truman Doctrine.<sup>143</sup> In October, the US reassured Turkey that it did not anticipate any immediate danger of war. Even with the demobilization of forces, the USSR would not likely reinvigorate any of its actions against Turkey.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 241.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d241>

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government: 1971), Document 291.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d291>

<sup>142</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government: 1971), Document 295.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d295>

<sup>143</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government 1971), Document 298.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d298>

<sup>144</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government 1971), Document 301.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d301>

### *Regional Considerations*

In a conversation between the Secretary of State and the Foreign Minister of Greece, the possibility of a pact of friendship between Greece and Italy was broached.<sup>145</sup> If this pact were to be created, Greece and Italy considered Turkey's inclusion and potential further extension to other eastern Mediterranean states. This serves as an early example of discussions about regional arrangements, which became more common as the Cold War scenario solidified.

The Turkish government asked for the US's opinion about whether a declaration of solidarity with Greece would be advisable. Ambassador Wilson found this unwise and advised that this task should be left to the United Nations.<sup>146</sup>

As the US continued to collaborate with the UK, Greece and Turkey on military issues, the UK clarified that its troops were not in Greece to protect Greece in the case of an attack but to deter potential attacks.<sup>147</sup> This clarification stood to ensure that none of the involved parties placed too much reliance on British presence in the region. Yugoslavia was an important state for the USSR, particularly because of its geographic

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<sup>145</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 230. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d230>

<sup>146</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 257. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d257>

<sup>147</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 269. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d269>

location. Yugoslavia offered access to the Adriatic and Mediterranean seas, shared borders with Greece, Turkey, Austria, and Italy, and could provide food and raw materials to the USSR.<sup>148</sup> For this reason, Yugoslavia remained a point of interest for both the USSR and the US, and would begin to play a role in American interactions with Mediterranean states. As American cooperation with Turkey continued, policy makers clarified that in general, they would prefer to give Turkey an estimation on situations rather than advice, which was commonly the British strategy.<sup>149</sup> The US did not want to determine Turkish policy, and did not want the USSR to perceive that the US was attempting to use Turkey as a puppet. Therefore, the US avoided giving Turkey explicit advice. The US also considered that the USSR wanted Turkey to continue to have a severe economic burden, in hopes that would cause Turkey to cede to Soviet wishes, and would not cease applying pressure to ensure Turkey maintained a large military force.<sup>150</sup>

#### *Public Law 75 and its Implementation*

American concern about Turkey's sovereignty and independence continued to grow throughout 1948. In early 1948, the National Security Council affirmed that the security of the eastern Mediterranean, and Turkey in particular, remained crucial for American security. Therefore, the US should support states in this region to the extent

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<sup>148</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1947, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV*, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1972), Document 573.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v04/d573>

<sup>149</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1947, The Near East and Africa, Volume V*, ed. S. Everett Gleason (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), Document 290.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/d290>

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*

possible.<sup>151</sup> Although Public Law 75 had been approved, due to logistical issues, its implementation had been delayed, causing concern for the Turkish government and the public.<sup>152</sup> The issues with implementation might have come from differing standards and experience between Turkish and American shipping companies.<sup>153</sup> Maintaining positive public opinion of the United States in Turkey was imperative, especially due to the fear that a drop in public opinion might incentivize some Turks to find Communism, or tighter relations with the USSR, more appealing.<sup>154</sup>

The US found it necessary to assure the American public that Turkey was working as much as it could to help itself and that American aid was necessary to allow Turkey to protect itself.<sup>155</sup> As aid to Turkey came from taxes, positive American public opinion remained a priority for those advocating for continued aid to Greece and Turkey. The primary focus for American aid remained modernizing and strengthening the Turkish army.<sup>156</sup> The USSR continued to pose the greatest threat to Turkey and to the Eastern Mediterranean as a whole, which the US agreed was vital to its own security. While administering aid, the US found it important to make its intentions about Greece and Turkey completely clear in order to avoid Soviet misinterpretation, which could lead to a

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<sup>151</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1948, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, eds. S. Everett Gleason and Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1974), Document 2. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v04/d2>

<sup>152</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1948, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, eds. S. Everett Gleason and Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1974), Document 8. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v04/d8>

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>156</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1948, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, eds. S. Everett Gleason and Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1974), Document 20. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v04/d20>

dangerous situation. The Turkish government indicated it also found it important for the US to make its intentions about Turkey known to the USSR, particularly that, “the United States demonstrates conclusively to the Soviets that [they] mean business.”<sup>157</sup> The US also considered providing a firm public commitment to Turkey or giving Turkey more money to alleviate the situation and solidify positive Turkish public opinion about American aid.<sup>158</sup> The Americans viewed Turkish confidence in its ability to reject Soviet advances as directly correlated to its willingness to reject them. Therefore, reiterating American support to Turkey had great value.

The US intended to support the Eastern Mediterranean, but found it necessary that the UK continue to provide support to the region as well, despite the UK’s declared intention to pull back.<sup>159</sup> In an address to Congress in which he argued for continued aid to Greece and Turkey, President Truman stated, “I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures... Should we fail to aid Greece and Turkey in this fateful hour, the effect will be far-reaching to the West as well as to the East. We must take immediate and resolute action.”<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1948, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, eds. S. Everett Gleason and Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1974), Document 8. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v04/d8>

<sup>158</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1948, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, eds. S. Everett Gleason and Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1974), Document 20. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v04/d20>

<sup>159</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1948, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, eds. S. Everett Gleason and Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1974), Document 28. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v04/d28>

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*



In June, the House Appropriations Committee recommended cutting the funds to Greece and Turkey to \$200 million due to perception that guerrilla warfare in Greece would conclude by the end of 1948.<sup>161</sup> The State Department responded with a request for \$275 million, to make sure the aid programs continued to be successful, but ended up with \$225 million.<sup>162</sup> As the internal issues in Greece posed the most pressing issue for Greece and Turkey, the State Department determined that if Greece needed additional funding, that funding would come from the funds allocated to Turkey.<sup>163</sup>

In October, the State Department determined it should defer the remaining \$25 million in its Greece/Turkey budget pending developments in the guerilla warfare in Greece.<sup>164</sup> In assessing long-term interests in Turkey, the US decided it needed to reduce or eliminate its military assistance in Turkey. It also recognized there would be no funds for assisting Turkey after 1948 unless there was Congressional approval.<sup>165</sup>

### *Western European Security Guarantee*

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<sup>161</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1948, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, eds. S. Everett Gleason and Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1974), Document 76. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v04/d76>

<sup>162</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1948, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, eds. S. Everett Gleason and Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1974), Document 80. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v04/d80>

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>164</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1948, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, eds. S. Everett Gleason and Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1974), Document 116. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v04/d116>

<sup>165</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1948, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, eds. S. Everett Gleason and Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1974), Document 117. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v04/d117>

May brought additional difficulties to the Turkish-American relationship. The US publicly gave Western Europe a security guarantee, but did not offer a similar guarantee to Turkey.<sup>166</sup> The Turks viewed this as problematic and feared that the USSR would interpret this action as an indication that the US did not value Turkey as much as Western Europe.<sup>167</sup> They asserted that this action undermined Turkish morale and gave credence to the small minority in Turkey that believed Turkey should submit to the Soviet Union.<sup>168</sup> The US responded by reminding Turkey of the massive amounts of aid the US was providing to Turkey, to which the Turks responded that a cheaper and better solution would be to extend a security guarantee to Turkey. Secretary of State George Marshall reminded the Turks that the US had to operate with consideration of the legislative process and the role of the press.<sup>169</sup> The US also reminded Turkey that it would not provide military aid indefinitely.<sup>170</sup> The aid to Turkey was meant to assist Turkey in the creation of a military force that could be sustained without continuous external support. The US did not want Turkey to rely on this aid indefinitely.

### *Pacts as a Policy*

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<sup>166</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1948, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, eds. S. Everett Gleason and Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1974), Document 62. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v04/d62>

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

<sup>170</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1948, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, eds. S. Everett Gleason and Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1974), Document 70. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v04/d70>

Turkish Ambassador Erkin informed his American counterparts that there were discussions about an entente forming between Greece, Italy, Turkey and the Arab States, which would provide opportunities for these states to ally more closely economically and politically.<sup>171</sup> While Turkey was not necessarily opposed to such an entente, it preferred the possibility of the US offering Turkey a security guarantee similar to the one the UK had offered Greece in 1939.<sup>172</sup> Greece also indicated that the Great Powers should be involved in any entente, even an Eastern Mediterranean entente. The US welcomed any additional collaboration between Italy, Greece, Turkey, and the Arab States.<sup>173</sup> In particular, this was due to the fact that the US viewed the Arab States as more susceptible to Communism and Soviet influence and believed that Italy, Greece, and Turkey could serve as positive leaders for the region. However, the US did not have any interest in involving itself in any additional pacts or ententes at this time, as it believed involvement would stretch American resources too thin.

In April of 1948, most of the discussions between Turkey and the United States concerned the development of a Middle East Pact, which would include a mutual security guarantee. Although Greece supported the formation of a Middle East Pact, Turkey found such a pact problematic for several reasons: it would be unrealistic and ineffective; it might make their position more dangerous by providing a false sense of security without providing any actual security; it might give the USSR reason to step up its actions against

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<sup>171</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1948, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, eds. S. Everett Gleason and Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1974), Document 25. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v04/d25>

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

Turkey and the rest of the region.<sup>174</sup> Therefore, Turkey was reluctant to join any regional grouping, particularly if there was no security guarantee from the US. The Turks also thought it would be unlikely the Arab States would ally with Greece or Turkey because both states had strong ties with the US and the UK.<sup>175</sup> The UK's colonial involvement in the Arab states did not encourage Arab states to ally with the UK, and the US by extension. Additionally, a lasting dispute between Turkey and Syria about their border would not encourage other Arab States to have an interest in collaborating with Turkey.<sup>176</sup> The State Department also determined that it did not oppose a joint declaration from Greece and Turkey, but thought that a declaration including Italy as well would be even better.<sup>177</sup>

In a conversation with Secretary Marshall, Turkish Ambassador Erkin stated, "Turkey's foreign policy...is firmly based on friendship, cooperation and solidarity with the United States."<sup>178</sup> The Turkish government continued to be concerned that the Soviet Union was using propaganda targeting Turkey's economic and political difficulties to soften Turkey into agreeing to a friendship pact.<sup>179</sup> Ambassador Erkin suggested that a possible regional arrangement with Greece, Turkey, and the US or UK could alleviate

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<sup>174</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1948, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, eds. S. Everett Gleason and Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1974), Document 52. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v04/d52>

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid.

<sup>177</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1948, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, eds. S. Everett Gleason and Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1974), Document 58. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v04/d58>

<sup>178</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1948, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, eds. S. Everett Gleason and Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1974), Document 109. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v04/d109>

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

some of the pressure from the Soviets.<sup>180</sup> In an attempt to explain continued Soviet pressure on Turkey, Secretary Marshall reminded Erkin that, “[t]he implementation of Soviet foreign policy, being based on a gangster system, costs very little.”<sup>181</sup>

Turkey requested closer relations with the US and viewed a regional arrangement as an avenue.<sup>182</sup> The new emphasis on US interest in Western Europe had the potential to make the entire Soviet periphery nervous; and some viewed it necessary for the US to declare its support for countries outside Western Europe.<sup>183</sup> The US saw potential benefits in entering into additional regional arrangements, but did not intend to pursue the matter without further consideration.<sup>184</sup>

#### *American Vision for the Future of Turkish-American Relations*

Towards the end of 1948, American policymakers had to determine how their relationship with Greece and Turkey would continue. Were these countries going to continue to be categorized separately in terms of aid, or would they be lumped together with foreign aid more broadly?<sup>185</sup> In a message to Secretary Marshall, the Ambassador to Greece stated, “The democratic defense of Europe must hinge on England and

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<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1948, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, eds. S. Everett Gleason and Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1974), Document 127. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v04/d127>

<sup>183</sup> Ibid.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

<sup>185</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1948, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, eds. S. Everett Gleason and Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1974), Document 137. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v04/d137>

Turkey.”<sup>186</sup> The Joint Chiefs of Staff determined that the matter, due to the strategic location of Greece and Turkey and the potential for the USSR to launch operations from bases in the Straits and the Aegean, required continued consideration.<sup>187</sup> Additionally, Turkey’s military potential and spirit made them able to stand up to USSR incursion, especially with US support. Therefore, the Department determined it should request \$100 million for Turkey.<sup>188</sup>

As the Atlantic Pact and its formation remained under consideration, Turkey’s potential inclusion was a topic of discussion. At this point in time, it was highly unlikely that Turkey would be included because it was not an Atlantic country and NATO needed to see how the Atlantic Pact would develop before expanding the organization.<sup>189</sup> The US preferred that Turkey not request inclusion at this point in time, but added that “Turks should be patient but should not be discouraged. We will not overlook their importance or their security problems.”<sup>190</sup> The Department determined it would allocate \$75 million

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<sup>186</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1948, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, eds. S. Everett Gleason and Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1974), Document 139. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v04/d139>

<sup>187</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1948, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, eds. S. Everett Gleason and Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1974), Document 140. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v04/d140>

<sup>188</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1948, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, eds. S. Everett Gleason and Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1974), Document 141. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v04/d141>

<sup>189</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1948, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, eds. S. Everett Gleason and Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1974), Document 150. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v04/d150>

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*

to Turkey for fiscal year 1949, and \$300 million for Greece and Turkey more broadly.<sup>191192</sup>

### *NATO and other pacts*

Greece and Turkey continued to be considered non-Atlantic countries, which solidified the reasoning for not allowing them into NATO.<sup>193</sup> US policy held that Mediterranean countries would have to make their own decisions about regional groupings.<sup>194</sup> The US saw that involving itself in some sort of Mediterranean pact would overextend its resources, in part because of the amount of aid it was providing the region. However, the Americans also realized that the Turkish government was utilizing American aid effectively and saw areas where aid would continue to enhance Turkey's military and economic development.<sup>195</sup> Additionally, they saw industries where renewed

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<sup>191</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1948, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, eds. S. Everett Gleason and Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States and Government Printing Office, 1974), Document 151. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v04/d151>

<sup>192</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1948, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, eds. S. Everett Gleason and Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1974), Document 152. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1948v04/d152>

<sup>193</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume VI, eds. Herbert A. Fine, William Z. Slany, Lee H. Burke, Frederick Aandahl, David H. Stauffer, and Frederic A. Greenhut (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1977), Document 106. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v06/d106>

<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

<sup>195</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume VI, eds. Herbert A. Fine, William Z. Slany, Lee H. Burke, Frederick Aandahl, David H. Stauffer, and Frederic A. Greenhut (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1977), Document 1140. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v06/d1140>

interest and exploitation could help to further develop the economy, specifically in agriculture and in mineral and oil exploitation.<sup>196</sup>

As the Soviet Union perceived NATO as a threat, it began to threaten small nations that intended to join the organization, including Turkey and Norway.<sup>197</sup> Due to these threats, President İnönü reiterated the importance of a formal commitment from the US regarding Turkey's security.<sup>198</sup>

In a discussion about Turkey's wish to be included in NATO, the geographic limitations of the organization, as stated in 1948, were revisited.<sup>199</sup> It was originally intended to only include north Atlantic states. However, in 1949, Italy and French Algeria were included in the organization, which severely hurt Turkish public opinion.<sup>200</sup> The Turks felt as though they were being abandoned. As the Turks had been actively resisting Soviet pressure for years, they took this development as a slap in the face and an indication that Turkey was not a priority for the United States.<sup>201</sup> Secretary Marshall asserted that President Truman found Middle Eastern security and Turkey's security, more specifically, as imperative. The Turks wondered, then, why US interest had shifted

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<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

<sup>197</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume VI, eds. Herbert A. Fine, William Z. Slany, Lee H. Burke, Frederick Aandahl, David H. Stauffer, and Frederic A. Greenhut (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1977), Document 1141. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v06/d1141>

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

<sup>199</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume VI, eds. Herbert A. Fine, William Z. Slany, Lee H. Burke, Frederick Aandahl, David H. Stauffer, and Frederic A. Greenhut (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1977), Document 1146. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v06/d1146>

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid.



from Turkey to Western Europe and why the US could not give Turkey a security guarantee. Marshall clarified that the only reason Italy and French Algeria were included was French insistence and that progress towards Turkey's inclusion would occur, albeit slowly.<sup>202</sup>

In an attempt to reassure Turkey of continued US concern for Turkey's security, President Truman addressed President İnönü stating, "The signing of the North Atlantic Treaty in no way diminishes the concern felt in the United States for the maintenance of the independence and integrity of Turkey and other free nations outside the Atlantic area; but rather, by strengthening the collective security of the Atlantic Treaty countries, the creation of this pact serves to enhance Turkey's security as well."<sup>203</sup>

British Foreign Secretary Bevin told the Turks to refrain from continuously asking the US to be included in NATO. He advised them not to strain Congress's good will and reiterated that Congress is the final determiner of aid to Turkey and Turkey's inclusion in international organizations.<sup>204</sup> Turkish Foreign Minister Necmettin Sadak indicated that he wanted Turkey's position in NATO to be reevaluated after the treaty was ratified. Bevin advised Turkey to not seek any additional pact with the US because

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<sup>202</sup> Ibid.\_

<sup>203</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume VI, eds. Herbert A. Fine, William Z. Slany, Lee H. Burke, Frederick Aandahl, David H. Stauffer, and Frederic A. Greenhut (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1977), Document 1149. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v06/d1149>

<sup>204</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume VI, eds. Herbert A. Fine, William Z. Slany, Lee H. Burke, Frederick Aandahl, David H. Stauffer, and Frederic A. Greenhut (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1977), Document 1153. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v06/d1153>

any new pact would require Congressional approval and the Truman Doctrine was working well for Turkey.<sup>205</sup>

At the Conference of Near Eastern Chiefs of Mission, which included all American diplomats in the Middle East, the US policymakers in the region determined that the US would not negotiate multilateral or bilateral security pacts with Near Eastern states until it was willing to commit the necessary military forces to carry out the pact.<sup>206</sup> The participants considered that unless the US had the willingness to carry out the pact, engaging in such a pact would put the states in greater danger. It also determined that it was undesirable to supply American arms to countries unless they already had the training capacity to use them.<sup>207</sup>

#### *Turkish budgetary concerns*

In 1949, Turkey was spending 48% of its budget on defense.<sup>208</sup> As this amount was unsustainable, the US reiterated its commitment to providing military assistance to Turkey and ensured it worded this commitment in a way that would not provoke the

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<sup>205</sup> Ibid.

<sup>206</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume VI, eds. Herbert A. Fine, William Z. Slany, Lee H. Burke, Frederick Aandahl, David H. Stauffer, and Frederic A. Greenhut (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1977), Document 73. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v06/d73>

<sup>207</sup> Ibid.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

USSR.<sup>209</sup> With the creation of NATO and increased tensions with the USSR, the US did not seek to further provoke the Soviets. In March of 1949, President İnönü publicly stated that, “[He] should like to lay particular stress on the precious military aid which has been given to us by the United States in one of the most critical periods which the world is going through, and for which the entire Turkish nation is imbued with the most profound gratitude.”<sup>210</sup>

The Turkish budget difficulties remained serious and would continue to be serious for at least 3 years. It seemed likely the Turkish government would cut the 1950 defense budget below the inadequate 1949 level.<sup>211</sup> The budget failed to provide funds for vital military needs, which threatened essential progress.<sup>212</sup> Some suggested relief measures included: direct grant in aid in the minimum amount of \$20 million, general authorization for AMAT to defray cost of imports authorized in the present defense budget along with nonbudgeted items, and placing Turkey on a grant basis for additional aid.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>209</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1949, Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume V, eds. William Z. Slany and Rogers P. Churchill (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1975), Document 344. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v05/d344>

<sup>210</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume VI, eds. Herbert A. Fine, William Z. Slany, Lee H. Burke, Frederick Aandahl, David H. Stauffer, and Frederic A. Greenhut (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1977), Document 1145. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v06/d1145>

<sup>211</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume VI, eds. Herbert A. Fine, William Z. Slany, Lee H. Burke, Frederick Aandahl, David H. Stauffer, and Frederic A. Greenhut (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1977), Document 1155. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v06/d1155>

<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

Into the second half of 1949, US policymakers determined that they needed to continue military assistance to both Greece and Turkey.<sup>214</sup> Turkey and the US shared a need for defense against the Soviet Union, meaning Turkey needed to be furnished with financial weapons in addition to military weapons.<sup>215</sup> Turkey proposed some remedies for its economic situation, including: continuance of the Turkish Aid Program, inspired by the Truman Doctrine; stepping up economic assistance so that Turkey's military establishment would be assured a self-sustaining economy. Turkey also requested \$20 million for wheat imports.<sup>216</sup> At this point in time, Turkey's defense appropriations had been reduced to 33% of the overall budget, which was still a significant amount.<sup>217</sup> Therefore, Turkey needed a reduction in its armed forces.

The UK's decision to end aid to Greece necessitated the end of its aid to Turkey. Turkey would have been able to support itself without any foreign aid if it hadn't been under pressure to maintain such a substantial military force.<sup>218</sup> US aid to Turkey had been granted for three purposes: to reassure Turkey of US determination to help Turkey; to

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<sup>214</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1949, National Security Affairs, Foreign Economic Policy, Volume I, eds. Neal H. Petersen, Ralph R. Goodwin, William Z. Slany, and Marvin W. Kranz (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1976), Document 133. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v01/d133>

<sup>215</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume VI, eds. Herbert A. Fine, William Z. Slany, Lee H. Burke, Frederick Aandahl, David H. Stauffer, and Frederic A. Greenhut (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1977), Document 1158. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v06/d1158>

<sup>216</sup> Ibid.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

<sup>218</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume VI, eds. Herbert A. Fine, William Z. Slany, Lee H. Burke, Frederick Aandahl, David H. Stauffer, and Frederic A. Greenhut (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1977), Document 1. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v06/d1>

improve Turkey's combat efficiency; to increase the confidence of the Turkish people.<sup>219</sup>

It was, therefore, necessary to continue providing military assistance on a small scale indefinitely. Turkey needed economic development to increase its citizens' standard of living and support its ability to resist attacks.<sup>220</sup>

It became clear that it was unlikely that funds for the Turkish program would increase, but the that program would need to continue for at least two years.<sup>221</sup> The State Department's proposed funds for Turkey for the following year were listed as \$25 million, with the assumption that the program would receive \$20 million that had been borrowed by the Greek program.<sup>222</sup> However, the State Department requested \$70 million in anticipation that the Turkish program would not receive more than a nominal amount from the Greek Program.<sup>223</sup>

### *Airfield construction*

The Americans wondered if they should make arrangements with Turkey to construct airfields and stockpile aviation gasoline within Turkey's borders.<sup>224</sup> This move

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<sup>219</sup>

<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

<sup>221</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1949, National Security Affairs, Foreign Economic Policy, Volume I, eds. Neal H. Petersen, Ralph R. Goodwin, William Z. Slany, and Marvin W. Kranz (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1976), Document 153. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v01/d153>

<sup>222</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1949, National Security Affairs, Foreign Economic Policy, Volume I, eds. Neal H. Petersen, Ralph R. Goodwin, William Z. Slany, and Marvin W. Kranz (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1976), Document 155. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v01/d155>

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

<sup>224</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume VI, eds. Herbert A. Fine, William Z. Slany, Lee H. Burke, Frederick Aandahl, David H. Stauffer, and Frederic A.

seemed risky considering Turkey's exclusion from NATO and American reluctance to offer a security guarantee. Additionally, it could induce the USSR to become more aggressive towards Turkey. Therefore, the US determined it was not a good idea in this moment, but it could be reviewed in the future.

The US and the UK discussed the potential for an aerial mapping survey of Turkey. The UK would complete the photographic component while the US took charge of the radar control, assuming Turkish approval.<sup>225</sup> They found it preferable to only use one nation's air force. Under renewed consideration, the US decided it should not seek an agreement about airfields and stockpiling aviation gasoline because it would provide the Soviet propaganda machine fuel to claim that the US and Turkey would be aggressive towards the USSR.<sup>226</sup> The US should instead supplement the Turkish effort to develop a military base in Iskenderon-Adana area.<sup>227</sup> The National Security Council reiterated that it was not the time to seek an arrangement with Turkey about constructing airfields,

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Greenhut (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1977), Document 1148. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v06/d1148>

<sup>225</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume VI, eds. Herbert A. Fine, William Z. Slany, Lee H. Burke, Frederick Aandahl, David H. Stauffer, and Frederic A. Greenhut (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1977), Document 1154. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v06/d1154>

<sup>226</sup> Ibid.

<sup>227</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1949, National Security Affairs, Foreign Economic Policy, Volume I, eds. Neal H. Petersen, Ralph R. Goodwin, William Z. Slany, and Marvin W. Kranz (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1976), Document 123. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v01/d123>

stockpiling aviation gasoline, or conducting an aerial mapping project, postponing the discussion until a later time.<sup>228</sup>

### *Continued American strategy*

Turkey continued to be geographically important for strategic reasons. The US saw that it should assist Turks in developing sufficient military strength to deter outside aggression and enable them to control Straits and protect sovereign interests.<sup>229</sup> The US should also increase the modernization and combat effectiveness of existing Turkish Army forces, naval forces, and air defense capabilities as well as providing equipment, maintenance, and spares.<sup>230</sup>

The years 1947-1949 firmly established US military aid to Turkey and facilitated collaboration between the two states both economically and militarily. However, as they entered the 1950s, the relationship between the US and Turkey would become more complicated because the NATO question became more pressing and the Cold War intensified with conflict in Korea.

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<sup>228</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1949, National Security Affairs, Foreign Economic Policy, Volume I, eds. Neal H. Petersen, Ralph R. Goodwin, William Z. Slany, and Marvin W. Kranz (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1976), Document 141. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v01/d141>

<sup>229</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1949, National Security Affairs, Foreign Economic Policy, Volume I, eds. Neal H. Petersen, Ralph R. Goodwin, William Z. Slany, and Marvin W. Kranz (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1976), Document 126. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v01/d126>

<sup>230</sup> Ibid.

### **Chapter Three: The Long Road to Accession**

Once NATO had firmly been established in 1949, Turkey's exclusion became a prominent feature in discussions between Turkish and American officials. The topic came up constantly and did not abate until Turkey eventually received an invitation to join the organization. Part of the difficulty in this process resulted from other NATO countries' reluctance to expand the organization, and especially to include a country geographically removed from the original states, such as Turkey. The early 1950s consisted of negotiations between the US and Turkey, as well as with other NATO members, about Turkey's exclusion from NATO, especially after Turkey participated in the Korean War. As the Cold War intensified, the Turkish-American alliance became more complicated.

#### *Continued Aid*

In terms of continuing American aid to Turkey, the US determined that it needed to acquire a detailed report of how the program was being implemented from the Turkish government.<sup>231</sup> The Turkish budget was organized into two categories: national defense and economic development. As the amount of aid given to Turkey remained substantial, the US wanted to encourage Turkey to reduce its 1951 budget to include only the most

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<sup>231</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V*, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 683. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d683>



essential projects for its development.<sup>232</sup> However, the US could not give Turkey assurances of grant aid at that time.<sup>233</sup>

In determining finances for Turkey, it was confirmed that Turkey would receive approximately \$81 million in FY 1950.<sup>234</sup> The Turkish armed forces reduced from 500,000 to 300,000, and yet 35-40% of the Turkish budget continued to go towards defense.<sup>235</sup>

It was important to the US to increase the standard of living in Turkey, which is why it continued to offer economic assistance.<sup>236</sup> An increase in the standard of living would help ensure that the public remained supportive of a democratic government and would not encourage looking to the Soviet Union for increased resources. In 1950, the ECA aid to Turkey totaled \$59 million and it was proposed Turkey would receive \$30 million from ECA in 1951.<sup>237</sup> These 1950 funds primarily went to agricultural equipment, modernizing and enlarging coal mines, developing internal transportation, and developing power resources.

The US continued to find value in extending aid to Turkey, as stated by Under Secretary of State James Webb, “[The] determination of Turkey to resist Soviet pressures

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<sup>232</sup> Ibid.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

<sup>234</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 688. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d688>

<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid.

remains unshaken and its confidence in its ability to do so has been greatly fortified by the military aid extended by the United States, as well as by periodic public reiteration of the interest of the United States in its security and integrity.”<sup>238</sup> Over the last year, the USSR released some of the pressure it had been exerting on Turkey, but it continued its press propaganda.<sup>239</sup>

Due to the continued level of Turkey’s economic burden, the US determined it needed to continue aid to Turkey.<sup>240</sup> As the US became involved in the training of Turkish forces, it wanted members of the Turkish military to be able to continue training their own forces, especially as the military continued to develop.<sup>241</sup> The US determined that some of the aid to Turkey would be allocated to resurface the runways at three bases and to develop two additional bases in order to sustain growth in the Turkish Air Force.<sup>242</sup>

The US made an informal agreement to limit its major fleet visits to three visits a year and to only use the ports at Izmir and Istanbul.<sup>243</sup> The purpose of this agreement

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<sup>238</sup> Ibid.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid.

<sup>241</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 693. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d693>

<sup>242</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 694. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d694>

<sup>243</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 698. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d698>

was to allow major fleet visits, which asserted US support for Turkey and other Mediterranean states, while avoiding overwhelming Turkish ports.

Despite collaboration and training with the US, the Turkish military continued to display deficiencies it would need to overcome to be effective in combat. Fortunately, continued cooperation would help to rectify these deficiencies and willingness to cooperate was present on both sides.<sup>244</sup>

### *NATO Exclusion*

Although Turkey's importance to the US had not diminished since 1947, the US remained unprepared to allow Turkey to join NATO.<sup>245</sup> Ambassador Wadsworth passed along a message to the Turkish Foreign Minister, which indicated, "The territorial integrity and the national defense of Turkey was continuously in our minds; it was part of our overall thinking but not confined to thinking alone."<sup>246</sup> This message stood to show US resolve to continue to contribute to Turkey's defense despite its exclusion from NATO.

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<sup>244</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 712. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d712>

<sup>245</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 689. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d689>

<sup>246</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 691. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d691>

NATO's creation made peripheral countries insecure and unsure of US intentions.<sup>247</sup> Greece and Turkey both wanted a regional security pact with the US.<sup>248</sup> The US could not commit to a regional pact because it had not yet determined if it was already overcommitted in Europe.<sup>249</sup> Greece and Turkey (and Iran) were unhappy with the US response to this issue.<sup>250</sup> Greece, Turkey, and Iran would not make a security arrangement without US inclusion.<sup>251</sup> However, according to US policy, US emphasis on NATO did not indicate a lessening interest in Greece or Turkey.<sup>252</sup> Continued American aid and support in Greece and Turkey stood to prove that American interest in those states had not diminished.

Ambassador Wadsworth told the US State Department of Secretary General Faik Akdur's disappointment about Turkey's continued exclusion from NATO. Akdur viewed Turkish inclusion in NATO as crucial for security and stability throughout the Near East, Mediterranean, and Europe.<sup>253</sup> According to Akdur, Turkey saw many ways in which its membership in NATO would positively contribute to security throughout Europe and the

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<sup>247</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 68. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d68>

<sup>248</sup> Ibid.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid.

<sup>252</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 706. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d706>

<sup>253</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 723. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d723>

Middle East In part, this added to Turkey's frustration about its inclusion in the organization.<sup>254</sup>

Turkey's participation in the Korean War intensified the continued exclusion from NATO and renewed the fervor with which Turkey pursued membership.<sup>255</sup> In 1950, Turkey volunteered to send forces to assist in the Korean War, as a display of solidarity with the United States. While the US did not ask Turkey directly for troops, Turkey intended its participation to demonstrate its usefulness as a military ally. Additionally, the Turkish government intended for its participation in the war to prove that Turkey would be a valuable asset to NATO.<sup>256</sup>

Including Greece and Turkey in NATO brought the question about how far NATO should extend. If NATO enlarges, the treaty would require revision.<sup>257</sup> According to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, NATO was the US's primary military commitment. Including Greece and Turkey in NATO at this point would stretch the capabilities of the organization too far, thus weakening NATO. NATO was not established enough to reasonably provide protection to its existing member states as well as Greece and Turkey, and the two states did not stand to offer enough support to the organization to balance the

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<sup>254</sup> Ibid.

<sup>255</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 725. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d725>

<sup>256</sup> Ibid.

<sup>257</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 730. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d730>

cost of including them.<sup>258</sup> The US viewed it as preferable to pursue alternatives and reconsider the issue in the future.

### *Policy towards USSR*

In continuing to develop policy towards the USSR, the US indicated that it was important for the “free powers” to determine a line that the USSR could not cross.<sup>259</sup> It determined that line should include an USSR attack NATO but might also include an attack on Turkey.<sup>260</sup>

The US suspected that the USSR did not possess a stockpile of atomic bombs, its navy was inadequate, and it had just begun to build a long range air force.<sup>261</sup> For this reason, the US determined that the USSR was not likely to go to war at this time. While recounting recent conversations with members of the Turkish government, General Collins of the US navy stated, “The United States and Turkey are at the world’s geographic extremes, but their cooperation has been necessary and been carried out in a fine way, [such] that working together should be established as our national policies.”<sup>262</sup> When asked by the Turkish President about the American response to a Soviet attack on

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<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

<sup>259</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1949, National Security Affairs, Foreign Economic Policy, Volume I, eds. Neal H. Petersen, Ralph R. Goodwin, William Z. Slany, and Marvin W. Kranz (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1976), Document 65. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v01/d65>

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

<sup>261</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 691. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d691>

<sup>262</sup> Ibid.

Turkey, General Collins responded that the US would “bombard” the USSR if it attacked Turkey, assuming Congress declared war.<sup>263</sup>

The US was unable to determine with any certainty what the Soviet intentions in the Balkans were.<sup>264</sup> As the most likely scenario for an attack on Turkey would come from Bulgaria, the US found it prudent to plan a strategy for response to such an attack. The US concluded that without overt Soviet assistance, Bulgaria would be unlikely to take more than a small area in western Turkey. As this would not provide much benefit to the Bulgarians or the Soviets, the US considered it unlikely they would initiate this sort of attack.<sup>265</sup> However, tensions between Bulgaria and Turkey became more pronounced in 1950, when Bulgaria decided to return Bulgar Turks and Pomacks to Turkey. This initiative would send 250,000 people through the Bulgarian-Turkish border.<sup>266</sup> Turkey did not intend to accept an influx of that quantity because of the magnitude. As at least some of these displaced persons would be able to enter Turkey, the Turkish government

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<sup>263</sup> Ibid.

<sup>264</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950, Central and Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV*, eds. S. Everett Gleason, Frederick Aandahl, and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1980), Document 682.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v04/d682>

<sup>265</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V*, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 719. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d719>

<sup>266</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V*, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 721. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d721>

requested additional aid from the US, as a massive influx of people into Turkey would continue to stretch Turkey's finances.<sup>267</sup>

### *Laying Mines in the Bosphorus*

The Montreux Convention had a stipulation that allowed for revision 15 years after signing. As this point would occur in 1951, the USSR began to ramp up its pressure on Turkey.<sup>268</sup> The Turkish government believed it needed a Mediterranean security pact, particularly in light of potential revision of the Montreux Convention.<sup>269</sup> The Turkish government considered whether it wanted to lay mines in the Bosphorus, near the Black Sea entrance to the Straits. Turkey decided to ask both the US and the UK about the legality of laying mines in the Bosphorus under the Montreux Convention.<sup>270</sup> The mines it proposed laying would not pose any danger to vessels passing through the Straits, unless they were activated in time of war. Even if a mine were to break loose, it would be inactive and would not damage any ships in the Straits.

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<sup>267</sup> Ibid.

<sup>268</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 696. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d696>

<sup>269</sup> Ibid.

<sup>270</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 697. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d697>



The Montreux Convention did not preclude Turkey from laying mines in the Straits.<sup>271</sup> In fact, the Convention contained a provision that stated, “Turkey may immediately remilitarize the zone of the Straits as defined in the preamble of the said Convention.”<sup>272</sup> This provision was intended to be used in the case of war, particularly if the conflict would threaten Turkey. The US wanted to give Turkey a number of jets and needed to determine when to tell the Turks about this plan.<sup>273</sup> Doing so earlier would enable the Turks to begin training earlier. It could also alleviate some of the frustrations coming from Turkey about its exclusion from NATO.

The UK, however, considered laying mines in the Straits to be illegal under the Montreux Convention.<sup>274</sup> This difference in opinion did not encourage the Turks to act one way or another and they indicated the US and UK should find common ground on the issue.

The US decided that Turkey needed to determine for itself what it would do about laying mines in the Bosphorus because the US did not want to share responsibility for the

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<sup>271</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 707. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d707>

<sup>272</sup> Ibid.

<sup>273</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 709. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d709>

<sup>274</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 724. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d724>

mines if something should go wrong. Additionally, the US feared that if it gave too much encouragement, the Turks might interpret that the USSR posed a significant threat.<sup>275</sup>

### *Turkish perspective*

In the May 1950 Turkish elections, the Democratic Party beat the Republican Peoples' Party.<sup>276</sup> This development had significance because the Republican People's Party had been Atatürk's party and held power since Turkey's founding in 1923. However, that did not initiate a change in Turkey's policy towards the US.<sup>277</sup> In a message to President Bayar, Truman expressed his congratulations about Bayar's victory and intimated that he looked forward to continued relations between the US and Turkey.<sup>278</sup>

In a meeting with Ambassador Wadsworth and other American officials, the Turkish Foreign Minister Mehmet Fuat Köprülü stated, "We shall...continue our orientation to Western democracies. Our interests lie with yours."<sup>279</sup> The Turkish people

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<sup>275</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 729. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d729>

<sup>276</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 704. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d704>

<sup>277</sup> Ibid.

<sup>278</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 705. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d705>

<sup>279</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 714. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d714>

were very pleased with Turkey's participation in the Korean War. They viewed the conflict as a fight against Communism and an opportunity to collaborate militarily with the United States. It was also an opportunity to show the strength of the Turkish armed forces. The Turkish Prime Minister stated that the "Korean war has opened new era, one in which we must strive harder and work faster towards common objectives."<sup>280</sup>

### *Shifting geopolitical landscape*

As 1951 began, the US predicted the USSR might extend its efforts to disrupt the Near East during the course of this year.<sup>281</sup> This was due, in part, to the fact that the US had demonstrated involvement in Western Europe and Asia, so the Near East appeared to be of lesser American concern. The US also reiterated that military and economic aid extended to Greece and Turkey had remained consistent since 1947; and that as a result of that aid, Turkey had been able to build up its military, as shown by its performance in Korea.<sup>282</sup> Turkey's participation in the Korean War encouraged continued American aid and support for Turkey.

As Turkey's tensions with Bulgaria concerning the removal of Bulgar Turks continued, Turkey had expressed willingness to reopen the border after its closure in

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<sup>280</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume V, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1978), Document 718. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v05/d718>

<sup>281</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1951, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1982), Document 3. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v05/d3>

<sup>282</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1951, National Security Affairs; Foreign Economic Policy, Volume I, ed. Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1979), Document 72. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v01/d72>

October 1950. As of January 1951, the border had been open for a month and 18,847 immigrants moved to Turkey from Bulgaria in that time frame.<sup>283</sup> A population move of that magnitude led to increased economic difficulties for Turkey.

As 1951 began, the US began to consider Yugoslavia in tandem with Greece and Turkey. All three shared geographic proximity and a reluctance to join the Soviet sphere, which made it feasible for the US to consider them together when developing policies for the region.<sup>284</sup> The US determined that it could use 1951 to build up the military in Europe.<sup>285</sup> As the US did not expect any military conflict with the USSR in Europe in 1951, it intended to take the year to strengthen European military readiness to the furthest extent possible. However, if any European states could potentially be attacked by the USSR in 1951, it would be Greece and/or Yugoslavia, according to American strategists.<sup>286</sup> US viewed it possible that the Soviets would attack Yugoslavia and encourage Greece and Turkey to not engage.<sup>287</sup>

Turkey's continued pursuit of NATO membership or a security arrangement with the US prompted Ambassador Erkin to propose American adherence to the British-

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<sup>283</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1951, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1982), Document 634.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v05/d634>

<sup>284</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1951, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1982), Document 207.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v05/d207>

<sup>285</sup> Ibid.

<sup>286</sup> Ibid.

<sup>287</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1951, National Security Affairs; Foreign Economic Policy, Volume I, ed. Frederick Aandahl (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1979), Document 5. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v01/d5>

French-Turkish Treaty of Mutual Assistance of 1939.<sup>288</sup> As American participation in the pact would provide Turkey with the security guarantee it wanted, this suggestion could have provided an answer to Turkey's concerns. However, the US continued to avoid any direct security guarantees outside of NATO.

It became clear to the Americans that for the rest of the Middle East to remain stable, Middle Eastern defense would have to be strengthened and developed.<sup>289</sup> In part, this came from the US wanting to make sure its aid to Greece, Turkey, and Iran was being utilized effectively. If the Middle East as a whole lost its stability, it would be very difficult for the other states to maintain their stability. The US also considered Turkey to be its strongest potential partner in the region and intended to utilize Turkey's strength to help stabilize the region as a whole. The US realized that it had become a primary leader throughout the Middle East and considered it important to retain that position and not allow the UK to reassert its presence in the region.<sup>290</sup> Prior to the 1950s, American involvement in the Middle East had been negligible. The Middle East was strategically important to both the West and the Soviet Union, as it had large amounts of oil, significant population sizes, and geographic significance. When the US realized it had the opportunity to be more of a leader in the region, it did not want to squander that

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<sup>288</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1951, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1982), Document 637. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v05/d637>

<sup>289</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1951, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1982), Document 6. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v05/d6>

<sup>290</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1951, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1982), Document 7. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v05/d7>

opportunity. With these factors in mind, the US asserted it should increase its efforts in Turkey.<sup>291</sup> The US considered Turkey to be a European state as well as a Middle Eastern state, and therefore wanted Turkey to be involved in the defense of both areas.<sup>292</sup>

After reconsidering the Turkish proposal to place mines in the Bosphorus, the US navy emphatically supported the initiative and wanted Turkey to proceed, despite disagreement coming from the UK and a potential negative Soviet reaction.<sup>293</sup>

### *Shift in American Policy*

In February of 1951, the Conference of Middle Eastern Chiefs of Mission<sup>294</sup>, organized and led by Ambassador McGhee, issued its agreed conclusions and recommendations. This Conference took place annually and included all American diplomats in the Middle East. The conference served to allow these diplomats to determine policy recommendations for the US State Department. The recommendations from the 1951 conference advocated for an immediate invitation to join NATO for Turkey, for fear that

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<sup>291</sup> Ibid.

<sup>292</sup> Ibid.

<sup>293</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1951, The Near East and Africa, Volume V*, ed. William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1982), Document 639.  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v05/d639>

<sup>294</sup> The Conference of Middle Eastern Chiefs of Mission included regional ambassadors of the United States. All parties were diplomats from the US, with the exception of a few Turkish diplomats that were invited by Ambassador McGhee for the purpose of convincing the other ambassadors of the necessity of Turkey's entrance into NATO.

without this invitation, Turkey could become neutral.<sup>295</sup> The members of this conference were influenced by additional information from US intelligence sources that clearly displayed the value Turkey presented to US interests and the dangers if Turkey should go neutral.

In the National Intelligence Estimate issued February 26, 1951, Turkey was portrayed as a staunch ally.<sup>296</sup> The Estimate went into great detail about Turkey's abilities and shortcomings. The economy was presented as a large problem, but it was consistently emphasized that despite the economy, Turkey would prove a formidable force in the event of a Soviet invasion.<sup>297</sup> The estimate reiterated that Turkey was one of the most staunchly anti-Communist nations in existence, and that its alignment with the West was unlikely to be altered, unless war broke out. Then, without formal assurances that the US would come to its aid, a possibility of neutrality would present itself.<sup>298</sup> This information changed the opinions of many involved in the conference, as it both painted Turkey as an ally of the United States and presented the inherent dangers to Western security should Turkey go neutral. Without Turkey, the Middle East stood a chance of being invaded by the Soviets. At this point in time, Turkey had significant military power. According to Ambassador McGhee, Turkey's army was bigger than all other NATO members' armies

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<sup>295</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1951, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1982), Document 12, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v05/d12>.

<sup>296</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1951, The Near East and Africa, Volume V, ed. William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1982), Document 642, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v05/d642>.

<sup>297</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>298</sup> *Ibid.*

at the time.<sup>299</sup> This information played a significant role in altering the stances of the other regional ambassadors. The size and strength of the Turkish military would add significant security to NATO and would allow NATO the use of those resources in combatting Soviet aggression. Additionally, the geographic location would solidify the Eastern component of NATO, a prospect which was becoming more appealing as the Cold War raged on.<sup>300</sup> Turkey's admission would provide NATO with a remarkable extension of resources, the value of which was not underestimated. Not only did the appreciation for Turkey's armed forces encourage the US to accept the idea of Turkey's membership in NATO, it incentivized the US to advocate for Turkey's membership on Turkey's behalf.<sup>301</sup>

Previously, potential Soviet retaliation had posed significant concerns for the United States. However, in 1951, intelligence sources indicated that the Soviet Union would be more amenable to Turkey's membership in NATO than to other potential bilateral agreements.<sup>302</sup> The United States realized that if membership in NATO proved unsuccessful, additional bilateral agreements between the US and Turkey would be necessary. The Soviet Union's apparent opposition to bilateral agreements solidified the United States' decision to advocate for Turkey's membership. Turkey's inclusion in

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<sup>299</sup> George C. McGhee, *Envoy to the Middle World* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., 1983).

<sup>300</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1951, European Security and the German Question, Volume III, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1981), Document 288. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v03p1/d288>.

<sup>301</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1951, European Security and the German Question, Volume III, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1981), Document 132. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v03p1/d132>.

<sup>302</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1951, European Security and the German Question, Volume III, eds. Frederick Aandahl and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1981), Document 284. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v03p1/d284>.



NATO should be based on Turkey's potential contributions, not anticipated Soviet reactions, the US reasoned.<sup>303</sup>

### *Balancing NATO and MEC*

In addition to NATO, the US and the UK wanted to create a Middle East Command (MEC) that would utilize Turkey and other Middle Eastern nation states to help ensure the continued stability of the Middle East against Communism, although it never came to fruition. According to Churchill, the Turks would be more likely to participate in MEC if they were under Eisenhower's command.<sup>304</sup> The US deemed it necessary to move forward with preparations for MEC but could not do so until Greece and Turkey were admitted to NATO. The US especially needed Turkey in the MEC because it was the only Middle Eastern country that could contribute substantial armed forces.<sup>305</sup> The UK agreed that Turkey should be included under Supreme Allied Commander of Europe (SACEUR) command.<sup>306</sup> The US wanted to increase the depth of Turkish-American relations. Including Turkey in both NATO and the MEC provided

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<sup>303</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, Central and Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV, eds. S. Everett Gleason, Frederick Aandahl, and William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1980), Document 691.

<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v04/d691>

<sup>304</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1952-1954, The Near and Middle East, Volume IX, Part 1, ed. John P. Glennon (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1986), Document 56. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v09p1/d56>

<sup>305</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>306</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1952-1954, The Near and Middle East, Volume IX, Part 1, ed. John P. Glennon (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1986), Document 57. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v09p1/d57>

avenues for the US to work towards deepening ties with Turkey.<sup>307</sup> The US and the UK wanted to prioritize the development of the MEC and were anxious to continue preparations.<sup>308</sup> When talking with Ambassador McGhee about the general international situation, the Turkish Foreign Minister indicated that the US and Turkey required unity of action towards the USSR. There were areas in which both Europe and the Middle East had significant vulnerabilities, but if Turkey and the US collaborated, they could ensure greater stability throughout the region. Turkey's invitation to join NATO solidified Turkish-American capabilities to act and react in tandem.<sup>309</sup>

The UK suggested Greece and Turkey should be included under NATO's southern command. As the MEC continued to be discussed, the US viewed it as crucial that Turkey was included in all MEC conversations.<sup>310</sup> Turkey had to be considered an equal partner to the US, UK, and France in MEC planning and implementation.<sup>311</sup> The US agreed with the UK and wanted Greece and Turkey to be included under NATO's

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<sup>307</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, Eastern Europe; Soviet Union; Eastern Mediterranean, Volume VIII*, ed. William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1988), Document 459. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v08/d459>

<sup>308</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>309</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, Eastern Europe; Soviet Union; Eastern Mediterranean, Volume VIII*, ed. William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1988), Document 460. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v08/d460>

<sup>310</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, The Near and Middle East, Volume IX, Part 1*, ed. John P. Glennon (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1986), Document 59. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v09p1/d59>

<sup>311</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, The Near and Middle East, Volume IX, Part 1*, ed. John P. Glennon (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1986), Document 60. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v09p1/d60>

southern command.<sup>312</sup> As it had been a long process for Greece and Turkey to be invited to join NATO, it was imperative that their membership not be contingent on participation in the MEC. Their accession into NATO also could not be delayed because the US and UK prioritized the MEC.<sup>313</sup> Additionally, the NATO and MEC commands would have to remain separate. Any integration of the commands, especially in its initial iteration, would undermine the value of including Greece and Turkey in NATO.<sup>314</sup> If the commands were integrated, it would appear as though Greece and Turkey had only been invited to join NATO so that they would agree to participate in the MEC. As both Greece and Turkey viewed participation in NATO as politically important, they would have taken offense to their inclusion being contingent on participation in the MEC.

#### *Turkish State of Affairs*

Ambassador McGhee had an extensive discussion with President Bayar in 1952 concerning Turkey's development potential, Turkey's role in the Middle East, and Turkey's reaction to a potential Soviet invasion in the Middle East. Throughout the course of this conversation, Ambassador McGhee and President Bayar agreed that Turkey had substantial development potential, particularly in increasing agricultural

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<sup>312</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, The Near and Middle East, Volume IX, Part 1*, ed. John P. Glennon (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1986), Document 61. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v09p1/d61>

<sup>313</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, The Near and Middle East, Volume IX, Part 1*, ed. John P. Glennon (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1986), Document 63. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v09p1/d63>

<sup>314</sup> *Ibid.*

production.<sup>315</sup> After the fall of the Ottoman Empire, Turkey's foreign policy had been Western facing and had neglected relations with other Middle Eastern states.<sup>316</sup> As Turkey had succeeded in its efforts to join NATO, McGhee thought it would be ideal for Turkey to revisit its policy towards Middle East states and potentially attempt to strengthen those relations. Regarding a potential Soviet attack on the Middle East, the Turkish perspective found it improbable that the Soviets would attempt to attack Iran or Iraq without also attacking Turkey, due to its proximity. As it would be difficult for the USSR to annihilate Turkey's military, and because Turkey viewed its security as tied to security in the Middle East more broadly and, therefore, had a vested interest in defending the Middle East, it was deemed unlikely that the USSR would pursue this course of action. With Turkey's newfound NATO membership, the US considered it even less likely the Soviets would attack the Middle East.<sup>317</sup>

In February 18, 1952, Turkey officially acceded to NATO. The accession took place at the North Atlantic Council meeting at Lisbon, where members of the Turkish government joined other governmental officials from all NATO member states for the accession and the rest of the summit.<sup>318</sup> The Soviet Union consistently opposed NATO expansion, and Greece and Turkey's accession to NATO was no different. However, the USSR did not have a concrete retaliation to this expansion, unlike its creation of the

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<sup>315</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, Eastern Europe; Soviet Union; Eastern Mediterranean, Volume VIII*, ed. William Z. Slany (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1988), Document 464. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v08/d464>

<sup>316</sup> Ibid.

<sup>317</sup> Ibid.

<sup>318</sup> "Final Communique: Chairman: Mr. L.B. Pearson," *NATO Online Library*, <https://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c520225a.htm>.

Warsaw Pact after West Germany joined NATO in 1955.<sup>319</sup> Turkey's accession into NATO began a new era of Turkish-American relations, as Turkey's NATO membership served as a confirmation of the US's intention to keep Turkey out of the Soviet sphere. While Turkey's NATO membership was a culmination of developments in Turkish-American relations in the late 1940s and early 1950s, it functioned as an enhancement of this relationship.

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<sup>319</sup> "A Short History of NATO," *NATO Online Library*,  
[https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/declassified\\_139339.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/declassified_139339.htm).

## **Conclusion**

In the early days of Turkish-American relations, regional geopolitics played a significant role in the actions both parties took. It can be tempting to look at bilateral relations in a vacuum, neglecting external actors, particularly if those actors behave subtly. However, no international relations exist in a vacuum, and regional geopolitics continue to play a role in Turkish-American relations.

This paper concludes with Turkey's accession into NATO, a policy decision that had consequences that are still in effect. Because of Article 5, Turkey and the US remain tied to one another, as well as to 28 other states, in defense. This paper seeks to show that this decision was not made lightly by either party. The US and Turkey engaged in many shared initiatives during the early Cold War years that played a significant role in shaping their relations. Turkey and the US became more integrated both economically and militarily through programs like the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan. They shared concerns about the Soviet Union's intentions to expand its sphere of influence, both regarding Turkey, and Eastern Europe more broadly. This encouraged the US and Turkey to further tighten their relations, resulting in Turkey's participation in the Korean War and accession into NATO.

Diplomatic initiatives, however, were not the only driving factor in the development of Turkish-American relations. Particularly in the early Cold War years, the Soviet Union heavily influenced the actions of both Turkey and the US and drove the two states to enhance their alliance. Without the threat of Soviet expansion, and the shared

reluctance to allow the USSR to encroach upon Turkey, the Turkish-American alliance would likely not have developed so quickly or with such strength.

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